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MARCH 17, 1936 15c

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Two Reports on the

Elevator Strike

BRUCE MINTON
WILLIAM F. DUNNE

Stalin Speaks

AUTHENTIC TEXT OF THE ROY HOWARD INTERVIEW

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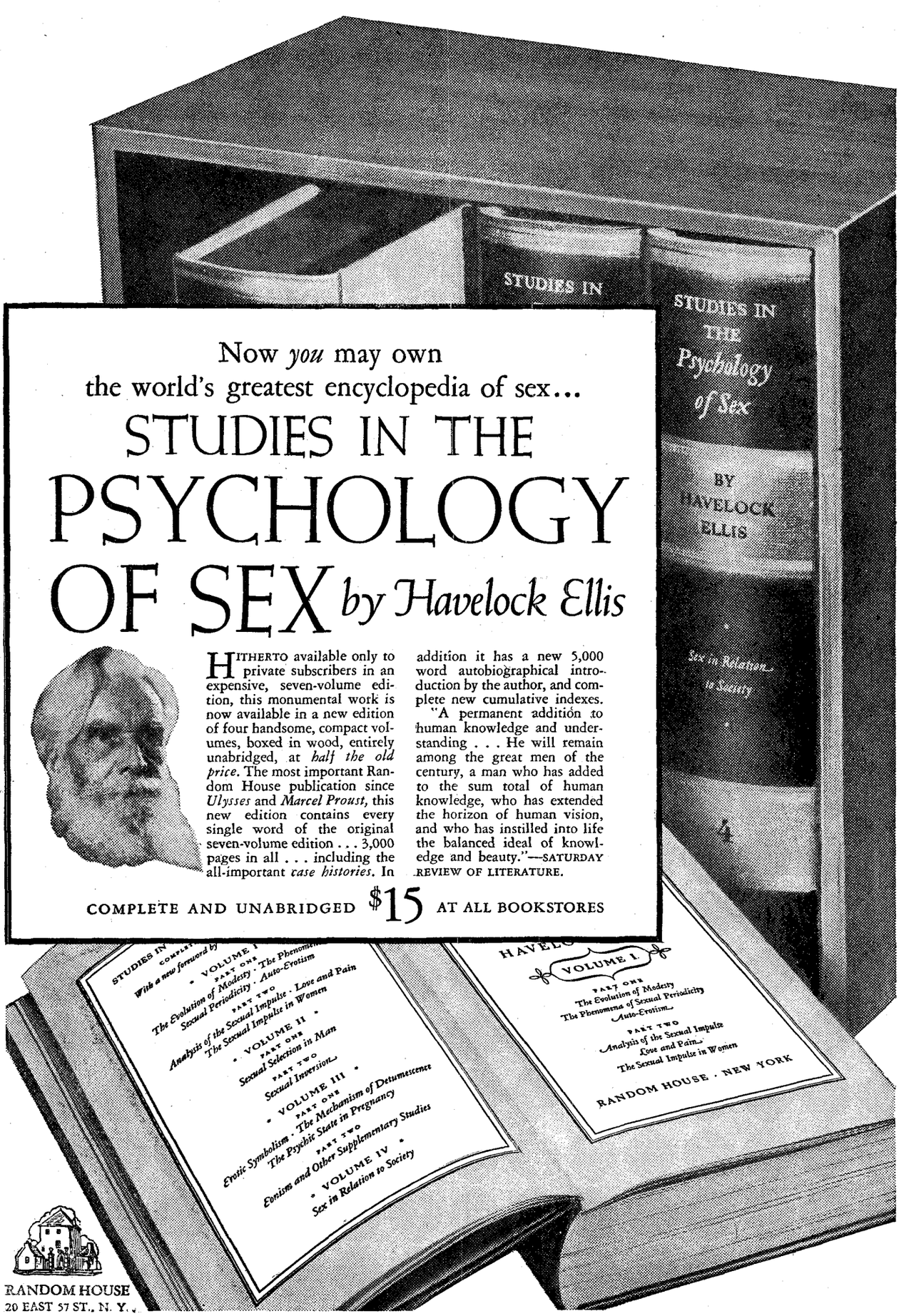

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New Masses

MARCH 17, 1936

"Suicide" in Brazil

THE Brazilian police are "investigating" themselves in connection with the "suicide" of the young American, Victor Allen Barron. Naturally, they will exonerate themselves from blame though the "suicide," in known Hitler style, took place while young Barron was in their hands. The conduct of U.S. Ambassador Gibson, collaborating with the police assassins in seeking to extort information from the youth, against whom no plausible accusation could be found, is as mysterious as it is odious.

When an American in Brazil is accused of "participating in revolt" by "driving an auto" in the streets of Rio de Janeiro, it hardly calls for a death sentence. The boy died under the most suspicious circumstances. Yet the ambassador says he was "well treated."

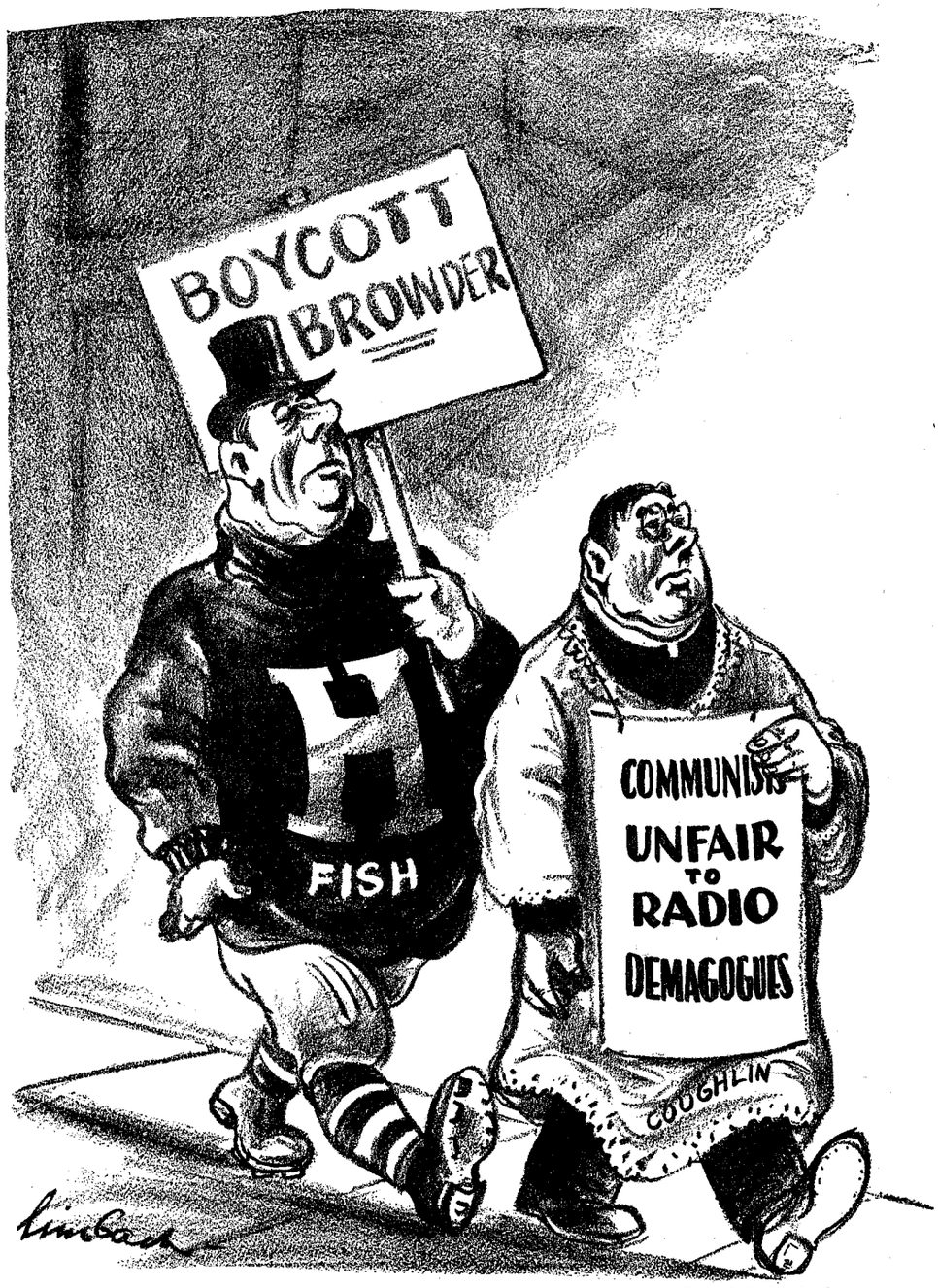
The whole case cries out for rigid investigation by others than either Ambassador Gibson or the Brazilian police. We shall shortly publish an exposure of all these matters, written by Harrison George, the youth's father.

Browder's Broadcast

EARL BROWDER'S talk over a nation-wide Columbia network last Thursday was a model of serene and logical exposition. Hamilton Fish's reply the following evening over the same network was a mixture of political nonsense and direct incitement to violence. The reactionaries who tried to prevent Browder's broadcast in advance knew very well that in any free and open discussion tory twaddle cannot stand up against Communist reason. Hamilton Fish "replied" to Browder by evading every important issue, ignoring the very questions put to him by Browder.

The general secretary of the Communist Party frankly discussed the most vital problems confronting the American people today. What gave his broadcast particular significance was that it outlined, for the first time, the specific program of the proposed nation-wide Farmer-Labor Party to millions unfamiliar with it.

> The main issue of 1936 is how to put America back to work. . . . We Communists demand that the government shall assume responsibility that every able-bodied worker shall be given a job, at union wage-scales. We demand that the farmers shall be guaranteed a market at fair prices for their produce that all the people need. We demand that all people not thus taken care of shall be provided with a federal system of Old Age, Unemployment and Social Insurance, sufficient to maintain the American standard of living, and paid for out of the profits of the capitalists.



Russell T. Limbach

Every great crisis in American history, Browder pointed out, has required a new party to solve it. Millions are ready to agree on a simple program that could immediately begin to improve conditions. The Communists, Browder said, propose that in 1936 all of this opinion should get together in every town and city, in every State and on a national scale, to form a Farmer-Labor Party.

> Such a Farmer-Labor Party would not require that we all agree on a complete program. It would not yet take up the full program of Socialism, of revolution, for which many are not yet prepared. It would pledge itself to carry out only those few simple measures which millions of people are already agreed upon.

A Farmer-Labor Party in power would reopen closed factories and put the workers back to work at union wages; outlaw the yellow-dog contract and company unions; help the workers make industry and agriculture 100 per-cent unionized; tax the rich to care for the poor; enact genuine old-age, unem-

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ployment and social insurance legislation that would really give social security to all of those who could not be put back to work; guarantee effectively the equal rights of the Negroes who are now stirring with revolt against their shameful treatment; provide for the millions of youth at least their minimum needs by enacting the Youth Act worked out by the American Youth Congress; stop the rising reaction in the country; handle the Supreme Court as Lincoln did, drastically removing the dictatorial powers which it has usurped; make it impossible for the Morgans and Hearsts to drag us into another imperialist war; join with all peace forces in the world to restrain the German, Japanese and Italian warmakers; keep America out of war by helping to keep war out of the world.

With the candor characteristic of the Communist Party, Browder expressed confidence that life itself will eventually bring an enormous majority of the American people to support the full Communist program "of the fundamental reconstruction of the country along the lines of the highly successful Soviet Union, on the basis of Socialism." But whether you agree with the full Communist program or not, he concluded, "we are convinced that millions of you in America are ready for this immediate organization and program which we propose—of a Farmer-Labor Party."

However painful Browder's clear-cut statements may have been to Hearst and Hamilton Fish, they evoked a warm response among many workers and middle-class progressives who are anxious to hear him on the radio again. Already contributions are being sent to the Browder Broadcast Fund, 35 East 12th Street, New York City, by those who want the Communists to buy time on the radio for the presentation of their views.

10,000 Crempas

FOUR deputies charged with killing Sophie Crempa, victim of the New Jersey power trust last September, have been acquitted by the Elizabeth Quarter-Sessions Court in Scotch Plains. Summing up for the jury, defense attorney Marvin P. O'Connor said:

> One Crempa will cause a fight; ten Crempas will cause a riot, and ten thousand Crempas will start a revolution.

The verdict was brought in despite the flagrant perjury of the deputies who killed Mrs. Crempa in cold blood on the porch of her home. The verdict was no surprise to the husband of the murdered woman or her daughter or her son.

In an exclusive story published by The Young Worker, Kamelia Crempa writes:

> On September 26, 1935, I saw my mother shot down in cold blood by deputies acting at the behest of New Jersey Public Service. The murder of my mother, the shooting of my father, and the beating received by myself on that fatal day was but the culmination of a long series of persecutions by the utility company. Previous to that time, my father had been imprisoned for six months; state troopers, disguised as surveyors had set upon my father and brutally beaten him; my father had been pictured as brutally insane in the press, my young brother was intimidated, also beaten and arrested. My father's attempts to make a living first as a tailor, then as a gasoline dealer were ruined. All this—why? Because my father would not bend to the whim and fancy of Public Service.

Now a Jersey court has given legal approval to the power trust's persecution of the Crempas. The defense attorney's figures were wrong. Not 10,000 Crempas, but millions of Americans will revolt against the cold-blooded killings of Big Business. They will do it by organizing themselves into a nationwide Farmer-Labor Party.

A Chance for Youth

STRANGE things happen during election campaigns. Herbert Hoover's heart has suddenly been touched by the plight of American youth. Speaking to the Young Republican League of Colorado on "A Chance for Youth," he took a crack at the New Deal, saying: "What of the taxes that will ooze from this spending and debt, all your lives?"

Certainly, America's youth should not be saddled in the future with the high cost of current government. Then why not help to prevent this by defeating the $549,591,299 Navy Bill? Why not cut taxes by revoking the $559,037,029 War Department appropriation which recently augmented the National Guard?

As might be expected, Hoover and the Liberty League champions of economy have made no such suggestions. Their fire is reserved for what the ex-president calls "the continued waste and folly wrought in the name of relief."

American young men and women have nothing to gain from the "chance" offered them by Hoover, Dupont and the Manufacturer's Association. If they want a real chance, let them support the Youth Bill (H.R. 10189) sponsored by the American Youth Congress, which offers employment and educational opportunities to American youth. And it would prevent Mr. Hoover's economical heart from breaking. The cost would not be met by the rising generation, but by taxation of accumulated fortunes.

Danger

OPEN-SHOP industrialists, big financiers and their legislative call-boys in Washington are busy these days getting the powerful House Rules Committee to vote special consideration to the Russell-Kramer "sedition" bill and the Tydings-McCormick "military disaffection" bill. Knowing that all unpassed bills will die with the adjournment of Congress, the wire-pullers are working on each member of the Rules Committee. Senator Russell, Democrat of Georgia, is doing his bit; he is pressing for hearings and a report by a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee which is considering the measure bearing his name.

If the Tydings-McCormick bill becomes law, anyone who merely criticizes miiltary appropriations, or appeals to troops not to shoot unarmed workers on strike, will receive a two-year prison sentence. The Russell-Kramer bill provides a five-year prison sentence for anyone who advocates the revolutionary overthrow of the government — the usual excuse for suppressing the most advanced labor organizations. Both bills seek to paralyze and destroy the American trade-union movement—which is why liberal and labor groups throughout the country have protested against them. Recently, the biggest trade union in the Western Hemisphere, the United Mine Workers of America, sharply denounced both measures.

This renders all the more sinister the last-minute drive of the Chamber of Commerce and their patrioteer associates. Certain frank Congressmen have made no secret of the fact that the recent "Red scare" raised on the floor of the House was only a screen for the big drive to get the Russell-Kramer bill out of the Rules Committee on to the floor for debate and passage. Some Congressmen are even inclined to drop the Tydings-McCormick bill in order to concentrate on the Russell-Kramer bill.

Unless liberal and labor organizations overwhelm these measures with de-

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termined opposition, they will be passed by the Democratic and Republican machines in Congress. There is the additional danger that the open shoppers will take advantage of the closing days of Congress to sneak the bills through.

No aid can be expected from the White House. Roosevelt has evaded all questions about the Tydings-McCormick bill; he has signed the reactionary National Guard bill. With an election campaign at hand, he will be pressed to make still further concessions to the right. Only a nationwide campaign by the organized progressive forces of the country can prevent the Tydings-McCormick and Russell-Kramer bills from becoming laws.

Finky Frances

WE suggest that Madam Secretary of Labor be rechristened Finky Frances and that a committee composed of the 400 seamen who walked off the New York-bound Panama-Pacific liner California in San Pedro harbor to enforce a demand for the Pacific Coast wage scale of $62.50 per month preside at the ceremony.

The officials of the International Seamen's Union, who have tried to split the union in the northern Pacific ports and who are working with the shipowners and the San Francisco Waterfront Employers' Union to destroy the militant Maritime Federation (to which all the marine transport workers' unions belong) were against the strikers. The federal District Attorney for Southern California had made public his intention of bringing charges of mutiny against these 400 strikers. The Hearst press was frothing at the mouth. Under these circumstances a spokesman for the men called Finky Frances on long distance and asked for advice. He got it.

We quote from a United Press Washington dispatch:

> "Why did they go back to work?" she was asked. "What were the terms of the settlement?"
>
> "They went back to work because I told them to," she replied. "There was no settlement."

We quote another U.P. dispatch of the same date:

> "San Pedro, Cal., March 5.—The . . . liner California glided out of port today after being tied up since Monday by a strike that was broken only after Federal authorities threatened to bring mutiny charges against the striking crew leaders."

Many newspapermen in Washington and New York who have been in close touch with the situation do not hesitate to say privately that the threat of mutiny charges was the result of a conspiracy in which the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor, the heads of the I.S.U. and shipowners were involved, intended to break the strike for a five dollar per month increase which the entire membership of the I.S.U. is demanding. It is also stated from reliable sources that an effort was to be made to proceed against Harry Bridges as the main fomenter of "mutinous" conduct among the strikers. Whatever the facts are, it is plain that Finky Frances need no longer envy the mounting wreaths of strikebreaking laurels adorning the brow of her first assistant, Edward McGrady. There is growing jealousy in the Burns, Thiel, Pinkerton, Baldwin-Feltz and Bergoff detective agencies.

THE NEW MASSES firmly believes that unless the liner California is met in New York by hundreds of seamen and longshoremen supporting the demands and action of the crew in San Pedro, these men will be fired, expelled by the reactionary union officials, blacklisted by the shipowners and driven from the industry. This is a clear issue of strikebreaking—not the first one by any means—by a department of the government that poses as the protector of labor.

France and Hitler

RAOUL DAMIENS, Paris correspondent of THE NEW MASSES, cables:

Hitler, it is believed here, chose this moment for marching troops into the demilitarized Rhineland zone in the hope of scaring the French Senate into rejecting the Franco-Soviet pact and the French voters into returning a Nationalist Chamber of Deputies in April.

The consensus of French Left leaders is that der Fuehrer miscalculated. Marcel Cachin says that many lukewarm Senators will now vote for ratification of the Franco-Soviet pact because of resentment against German pressure and because they consider Soviet assistance the best guarantee of French security. Similar reasons will bring the mass of doubtful voters to the People's Front. Both in domestic and foreign affairs, the Nationalist cause has received a blow from Hitler.

Labor's position is indicated in the proclamation issued by the C.G.T. (the General Federation of Labor) unity congress in Toulouse: "The Congress reaffirms the adherence pledged by the delegates of the trade-union movement to the People's Front program calling for the mobilization of the French masses for the improvement of their lot and the triumph of liberty."

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Stalin Speaks

Complete Text of the Roy Howard Interview

A POLITICAL event of the utmost importance during the past week has been the interview which Joseph Stalin gave Roy W. Howard, chairman of the board of directors of the Scripps-Howard newspapers. The interview was published in The New York World-Telegram first and elsewhere later. We are here reproducing the full, authentic interview as cabled from Moscow to The Daily Worker. The complete version contains Stalin's explanation of the new Soviet constitution, omitted by the bourgeois newspapers.

Stalin discussed with great frankness and clarity the Soviet Union's attitude toward Japan's aggressive acts on the frontier of the Mongolian People's Republic; Germany's war preparations; the next great war and the roles played by Germany and Japan in provoking it; capitalism as the condition which furnishes the chief war menace today; the alleged attempts of the Soviet Union to "export" revolution to other countries; the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement regarding propaganda in the United States and the U.S.S.R.; the differences between Communism, State Socialism and fascism and the relations between the Soviet system and American democracy.

Stalin's replies reveal qualities for which millions of workers everywhere have long admired him; inflexible principle is combined with persuasive presentation; unalterable aim goes hand in hand with appropriate method. We learn that the Soviet Union stands first among the nations of the world in the efforts to preserve peace, but that Japanese aggression will meet with the powerful resistance of a Socialist people. We are given the most cogent reasons why the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. can develop and compete peacefully, but with his calm and ineluctable logic Stalin shows the irreconcilable differences between capitalism and Socialism.

Of particular import at this writing is Stalin's analysis of Germany as a "focal point of war danger." He referred specifically to Hitler's threats against France and the Soviet Union. That analysis has been borne out by the Nazi occupation of the Rhineland with its threat to France, and Hitler's demand for a united front of western powers against the Soviet Union. These military and diplomatic moves by the fascist dictator are an aggressive and immediate menace to the peace of the entire world. The interview follows:

Howard: What would, in your opinion, be the consequences of the recent events in Japan for the situation in the Far East?

Stalin: So far, it is difficult to say. Too little material exists for this. The picture is not sufficiently clear.

Howard: What would be the attitude of the Soviet Union should Japan launch a serious military drive against the Mongolian People's Republic?

Stalin: In case Japan ventures to attack the Mongolian People's Republic, seeking to destroy its independence, we will have to assist the Mongolian People's Republic. Litvinov's assistant, Stomonyakov, [Assistant People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs] has already recently so informed the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow, and pointed out the invariably friendly relations which the U.S.S.R. entertained with the Mongolian People's Republic since 1921.

We will assist the Mongolian People's Republic in the same way as we helped them in 1921.

Howard: Would a Japanese attempt to seize Ulan Bator make positive action by the U.S.S.R. necessary?

Stalin: Yes, it would.

Howard: Have recent events developed any new Japanese activities in this region which have been construed by the Soviet as of an aggressive nature?

Stalin: The Japanese seem to continue concentrating troops near the frontier of the Mongolian People's Republic, but so far, no new attempts at frontier clashes are observed.

Howard: The Soviet Union appears to believe that Germany and Poland have aggressive designs against the Soviet Union and are planning military cooperation which should aid the realization of these designs. Poland has, however, protested its unwillingness to permit any foreign troops to use her territory as a basis for operations against a third nation. How does the Soviet Union envisage such aggression by Germany? From what position and in what direction would German forces operate?

Stalin: History shows that when a state is intent upon making war against another state, even though not adjacent, it begins to seek frontiers across which it could reach the frontiers of the state which it desires to attack. Usually, the aggressive state finds that frontier.

It finds it either with the aid of force, as in 1914, when Germany invaded Belgium in order to deal a blow against France or it "borrows" a frontier, such as Germany did with regard to Latvia, for instance, in 1918 in attempting to break through to Leningrad across Latvia.

I don't know what specific frontiers Germany could adopt for her purposes, but I think that those willing "to lend" a frontier to her can be found.

Howard: Seemingly the entire world today is predicting another great war. If war proves inevitable, when do you think it will come, Mr. Stalin?

Stalin: This is impossible to predict. War may break out unexpectedly. Nowadays wars are not declared. They simply start.

But on the other hand, I believe that the friends of peace grow stronger. The friends of peace are able to work in the open. They base themselves upon the force of public opinion. They have at their disposal such instruments as, for instance, the League of Nations. This is to the advantage of the friends of peace.

Their strength lies in the fact that their activities against war are based on the wide masses of the people. There is no people in the whole world desiring war.

As regards the enemies of peace, they are forced to work secretly. This is to their disadvantage.

However, the possibility is not excluded that due to this very fact they embark upon military adventures as an act of desperation. One of the newest successes of the cause of the friends of peace is the ratification of the Franco-Soviet Pact of mutual assistance by the French Chamber of Deputies. This pact represents a certain obstacle to the enemies of peace.

Howard: Should war come, Mr. Stalin, where is it most likely to break out? Where are the war clouds more menacing, East or West?

Stalin: In my opinion, there are two focal points of the war danger.

The first focal point is the Far East, in the zone of Japan. I have in mind repeated statements by Japanese military men containing threats against other states.

The second focal point is in the zone of Germany. It is difficult to say which is more menacing. But both of them exist and both are smoldering. In comparison with these two principal focal points of the war danger, the Italo-Ethiopian war is an episode.

At present, the Far Eastern focal point of danger is the most active. It is possible, however, that the center of the menace may shift to Europe. Evidence of this is provided, for instance, by Hitler's recent interview given to a French paper. In this interview, Hitler seems to attempt to say peaceful things. But this "peacefulness" of his is so thickly interspersed with threats against France and the Soviet Union that nothing remains of the "peacefulness."

As you can see, even when Hitler desires

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HITLER OFFERS PEACE

William Gropper

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to speak for peace, he cannot dispense with threats. This is symptomatic.

Howard: What situation or condition, in your opinion, furnishes the chief war menace today?

Stalin: Capitalism.

Howard: In which specific manifestation of capitalism?

Stalin: In its imperialistic, annexationist manifestations.

You remember how the first world war broke out. It broke out as a result of the desire to redivide the world.

Today the background is the same. There are capitalist states which consider themselves cheated during previous redivisions of spheres of influence, territories, sources of raw materials, markets, etc., and which would again desire to redivide them to their own advantage.

Capitalism in its imperialistic stage is a system which regards war as a legitimate method for solution of international disputes. Although it does not give this method legal status, it accepts it in fact.

Howard: May there not be an element of danger in the genuine fear existing in what you term capitalistic countries, of intent on the part of the Soviet Union to force its political theories on other nations?

Stalin: There is no justification for such fears. If you think that the people of the Soviet Union have any desire themselves, and, moreover, by force, to alter the face of surrounding states, you are badly mistaken.

The people of the Soviet Union naturally desire that the face of surrounding states should change, but this is the business of surrounding states themselves. I fail to see what dangers surrounding states can see in the ideas of the Soviet people if these states are really firmly seated in their saddles.

Howard: You appreciate, no doubt, Mr. Stalin, that much of the world has long entertained a different impression.

Stalin: This is a product of misunderstanding.

Howard: A tragic misunderstanding?

Stalin: No, comic. Or perhaps tragicomic.

You see, we Marxists believe that revolution will occur in other countries as well. But it will occur at a time when it will be considered possible or necessary by revolutionaries of those countries. Exported revolution is nonsense. Each country, if it so desires, will make its own revolution. And if no such desire exists, no revolution will occur.

For instance, our country wanted to effect a revolution, and did effect it, and now we are building a new, classless society. But to assert that we desire to bring about revolution in other countries, by interference with their national life is unwarranted.

Howard: At the time of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S.S.R. and U.S.A., President Roosevelt and Litvinov exchanged identical notes concerning the question of propaganda. Paragraph Four of Litvinov's letter to President Roosevelt says that the Soviet government undertakes "not to permit the formation or residence on its territory of any organization or group . . . which has as an aim to overthrow or preparation for the overthrow of, or bringing about by force, a change in the political or social order of the whole or any part of the United States, its territories or possessions."

Why, then, Mr. Stalin, did Litvinov sign this letter in compliance with the terms of paragraph Four if it is incompatible with the interests of the Soviet Union or beyond its control?

Stalin: Execution of the obligation of the paragraph which you quoted is within our control.

We have been carrying out and will carry out these obligations. According to our constitution, political emigrés have the right to reside on our territory. We accord them the right of asylum, the same as the United States accords the right of asylum to political emigrés.

It is entirely obvious that when Litvinov signed this letter he assumed that obligations contained in it have a reciprocal character.

Do you, Mr. Howard, regard it as conflicting with the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement if there are Russian White Guard emigrés in U.S. territory conducting propaganda against the Soviets and in favor of capitalism and receiving material assistance from American citizens and sometimes representing terroristic groups?

Obviously these emigrés enjoy the right of asylum existing also in the U. S. So far as we are concerned we would never tolerate a single terrorist in our territory regardless against whom he would contemplate his crimes. Apparently the right of asylum receives broader interpretation in the U.S.A. than in our country.

Well, we don't complain. Perhaps you would object that we sympathize with those political emigrés arriving in our territory. But are there no American citizens sympathizing with White Guard emigrés who conduct propaganda in favor of capitalism, against the Soviets? Then what does the point involve? The point is not to assist these persons, not to finance their activities. The point is that officials of both countries should not interfere in the internal affairs of the other country.

Our officials are honestly carrying out this obligation. If any one of them is not, let us be informed. If things should go too far and deportation of all White Guard emigrés from the United States were demanded, this would be an attempt against the right of asylum promulgated in both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

Here we must recognize a certain reasonable limit for claims and counter-claims. Litvinov signed his letter not in a private capacity but as representative of the state, just as did President Roosevelt. Their agreement represents an agreement between two states. Signing this agreement both Litvinov and President Roosevelt as the representatives of two states have in mind the activities of the agents of those states, who should not and will not interfere in each other's internal affairs.

The right of asylum promulgated by both countries, could not be affected by this agreement. Within this frame-work the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement should be interpreted as an agreement between representatives of two states.

Howard: Did not Browder and Darcy, American Communists, appearing before the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in Moscow last summer, appeal for the overthrow by force of the American government?

Stalin: I admit that I do not recall the speeches of Comrades Browder and Darcy. I do not even recall of what they spoke. It is possible that they said something of this nature. But it was not the Soviet people who created the American Communist Party. It was created by Americans. It legally exists in the U.S.A., it nominates its candidates in the elections, including Presidential elections.

If Comrades Browder and Darcy did once make a speech in Moscow, then at home, in the U.S.A., they made similar and doubtless even more determined speeches hundreds of times.

American Communists have the opportunity freely to preach their ideas. It would be absolutely wrong to hold the Soviet government responsible for activities of the American Communists.

Howard: But in this instance, is it not a fact that their activities took place on Soviet soil contrary to the terms of paragraph Four of the agreement between Roosevelt and Litvinov?

Stalin: In what do the activities of the Communist parties consist? In what ways can they manifest themselves?

These activities usually consist in the organization of working masses, in organizing meetings, demonstrations, strikes, etc. It is absolutely clear that American Communists cannot perform this on Soviet territory. The American workers are not in the U.S.S.R.

Howard: I take it that the gist of your thought then is that an interpretation can be made which will safeguard and continue good relations between our countries?

Stalin: Yes, absolutely.

Howard: Admittedly Communism has not been achieved in Russia. State Socialism has been built. Have not fascism in Italy and National Socialism in Germany claimed that they have attained similar results? Have not both been achieved at the price of privation and personal liberty sacrificed for the good of the state?

Stalin: The term "State Socialism" is not precise. Under this term many understand an order under which a certain part of the wealth, sometimes quite a considerable part, passes into state ownership or under its con-

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trol while in the great majority of cases the ownership of plants, factories and land, remains in private hands.

Many understand "State Socialism" in this way. Sometimes a system is concealed behind this term in which the capitalist state, in the interests of preparation for the conduct of war, takes upon itself the maintenance of a certain number of private enterprises.

The society which we have built can in no way be termed "State Socialism."

Our Soviet society is Socialist because private ownership of factories, plants, land, banks and means of transportation has been abolished in our country and replaced by public ownership. The social organization which we have created can be termed a Soviet, Socialist organization which has not yet been quite completed, but is in its root a Socialist organization of society. The foundation of this society is public ownership: state ownership, namely, ownership by the entire people as well as cooperative-collective-farm property.

Neither Italian fascism nor German National "Socialism" have anything in common with such a society, primarily because private ownership of factories, plants, lands, banks, means of transportation, etc., remain untouched there, and, therefore, capitalism in Germany and Italy remains in full force.

Yes, you are right that we have not yet built a Communist society. It is not so easy to build such a society.

The difference between a Socialist and Communist society is probably known to you. A certain inequality in regard to property still exists in a Socialist society. But in a Socialist society there is no unemployment, no exploitation, no oppression of nationalities. In a Socialist society, everybody is obliged to work and he is remunerated for his labor not yet according to his needs, but according to the quantity and quality of the labor expended.

Therefore, wages still exist and unequally differentiated wages at that. Only when we succeed in creating an order in which people receive for their labor from society not according to the quantity and quality of their labor, but according to their needs, will it be possible to say that we have built up a Communist society.

You say that in order to build our Socialist society we sacrifice personal liberty and suffer privations. In your question appears the notion that Socialist society negates personal liberty.

This is incorrect. Of course, in order to build something new, one has to economize, accumulate means, temporarily limit one's requirements, borrow from others. If you want to build a new house, you save money temporarily and limit your requirements, otherwise you might not build your house.

This is all the more true when the upbuilding of a whole new human society is concerned. It was necessary temporarily, to limit certain requirements, accumulate necessary means, strain forces. We acted precisely in this way and built a Socialist society.

But we built this society not for the curbing of personal liberty, but in order that human personalities should really feel free. We built it for the sake of real personal liberty, liberty without quotation marks.

It is difficult for me to imagine what "personal liberty" the unemployed can have who go hungry and cannot find utilization of their labor.

Real liberty exists only there where exploitation has been annihilated, where no oppression of some peoples by others exists, where there is no unemployment and pauperism, where a person does not tremble because tomorrow he may lose his job, home and bread. Only in such a society is real and not illusory personal and every other liberty possible.

Howard: Do you view as compatible American democracy and the Soviet system.

Stalin: American democracy and the Soviet system can exist simultaneously and compete peacefully. But one cannot develop into the other. The Soviet system will not evolve into American democracy or vice-versa.

We can exist peacefully together if we don't indulge in too much mutual fault-finding in all kinds of trifles.

Howard: A new constitution is being elaborated in the U.S.S.R. providing for a new system of elections. To what degree can this new system alter the situation in the U.S.S.R., since formally only one party will come forward at elections?

Stalin: We will adopt our new constitution probably at the end of this year. The commission for elaborating the constitution is functioning and will soon finish its work.

As we already announced, in accordance with the new constitution, elections will be universal, equal, direct and secret.

You are misled by the fact that only one party will come forward at these elections. You do not see how there can be an election struggle under these conditions.

It is evident that election lists will be put out not only by the Communist Party, but by all kinds of public and non-party organizations. And we have hundreds of these. We have no parties standing in opposition to each other, just as we have no class of capitalists and a class of workers exploited by capitalists in opposition to each other.

Our society consists exclusively of free working people of cities and villages, workers, peasants, intelligentsia. Each of these strata may have its special interests and express them in numerous existing organizations.

But as soon as there are no more classes, as soon as boundaries between classes are effaced, as soon as only a few but non-fundamental differences between various strata of the Socialist society remain—there can no longer be nourishing ground for the formation of parties struggling among themselves.

Under National "Socialism," there is also only one party. But nothing will come out of this fascist one-party system. The situation is this. In Germany capitalism has remained. Classes and class struggle have remained. And this class struggle, of parties representing opposing classes, will break into the open, just as it broke through, for example, in Spain.

In Italy also, only one party, namely the fascist party exists, and for the same reasons, it will fare no better there either.

Why will our elections be universal?

Because all citizens, excluding those deprived of vote by court, will have the right to vote and the right to be elected.

Why will our elections be equal?

Because neither differences in regard to property (differences partly existing) nor differences of race and nationality will cause any privileges or disadvantages. Women will enjoy the right to elect and be elected equally with men. Our elections will be really equal.

Why secret?

Because we desire to give the Soviet people absolute liberty of voting for those they desire to elect, those whom they trust to ensure their interests.

Why direct?

Because direct elections on the spot to all representative organs, up to the supreme organ, are a better guarantee of the interests of the working population of our boundless country.

Do you think the election struggle will not exist? But it will exist and I foresee a very animated election struggle.

Not a few organizations exist in our country which function poorly. Sometimes it happens that this or that local government or organ have to satisfy one or another of the many sided and ever increasing demands of the working population of town and countryside.

Have you or haven't you built a good school? Have you improved living conditions? Aren't you a bureaucrat? Have you helped to make our labor more effective, our life more cultured?

Such will be the criteria with which millions of voters will approach candidates, casting away those who are unfit, striking them off lists, advancing better ones, nominating them for elections.

Yes, the electoral struggle will be animated. It will proceed around numerous very sharp questions, namely practical questions having first-rate significance for the people.

Our new election system will spur on all institutions and organizations and will force them to improve their work. Universal, equal, direct and secret elections in the U.S.S.R., will be a whip in the hands of the population against poorly functioning organs of government.

Our new Soviet constitution will be, in my opinion, the most democratic constitution of all those existing in the world.

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Revolutionary Research

THE NEW MASSES will shortly publish reviews of two of the most important books issued in recent years. But since these books are already before the public, we take this occasion to call the reader's attention to them.

The first of these is *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?* by Sidney and Beatrice Webb. In a brilliant analysis of this masterpiece, R. Palme Dutt has called it "a political event." This is a sober statement of fact. Not only is the book itself monumental in scope, accuracy and authority, but it gains added significance when considered in its historical focus.

Few authors have brought to a study of the first socialist state the insight and experience of the Webbs. That experience is all the more striking because it was based within the labor movement on a struggle *against* Communism.

Fifty years ago, Sidney Webb began his political career in the newly-formed Fabian Society, whose leading spirit he remained for decades. Fabianism was the earliest clearly-formulated alternative in the labor movement to Marxism. Through the late Edouard Bernstein, who sat at the Webbs' feet in London, Fabianism later spread through Europe as Revisionism.

The Fabians boasted that their first achievement was "to break the spell of Marxism in England." Representing the most progressive wing of the bourgeoisie, they countered the revolutionary policy of class-struggle with an attempt to guide the working class along the path of peaceful reform within the existing capitalist structure.

The Fabians, headed by the Webbs, were self-confident until the World War gave them their first great shock. They then discovered their own failure "to think internationally." Doubts of reformism cropped up here and there in the *Decay of Capitalist Civilization,* published by the Webbs in 1923. The great general strike of 1926—which Palme Dutt characterizes as the "first clear pointer of the future British revolution" — dealt another blow to Fabian illusions.

Moreover, the Fabian thinker participated in the two minority Labor governments headed by Ramsay MacDonald in 1924 and 1929. Sidney Webb became Lord Passfield; yet his voluminous writings are silent on his experiences in the Labor governments. Always scrupulously honest, Webb must have grasped the lessons of his experience as a minister of the crown. The Labor governments could make no advance toward basic social change; they could not halt the development of the capitalist crisis, which involved the Labor government in political disgrace and the Labor Party in a heavy electoral disaster. Reformism was obviously a failure as a line for the working-class to follow; and it is at about this time that the Webbs turned to their persistent study of the first socialist republic, which culminated in *Soviet Communism.*

They approached this study with all the typical anti-Soviet prejudices of the Second International; they emerged from it convinced that the Soviet Union is on the right path. Pointing to the "unrivalled scientific authority of the Webbs as trained and responsible investigators," Palme Dutt puts his finger on the essential significance of their monumental study:

> It is not that their conclusions, taken in their most general character, are new in principle to those already acquainted with the outlook of Communism and with the realities of the Soviet order, as these have been developing for nearly two decades. For these it may rather be noted that in the exhaustive range of this survey over every field, no one, even the most expert, can fail to learn much that is new in detail and of the highest value. But what is new for the widest public is that these conclusions, these general principles, characteristics, aims and life of Soviet democracy are here set out and inescapably proved for the first time, not as subjective impressions or theoretical principles, but on the basis of a full survey of objective facts, with such a wealth of completeness, living detail and illustrative example, meeting and dispelling in the broad sweep of the argument all the thousand-and-one idle skepticisms, criticisms and misconceptions which still commonly block the view, that it is impossible for any impartial reader after a careful reading, to fail to be fully convinced of the essential truth of this living picture of a new and higher form of democracy in being.

The Webbs are outstanding investigators on a continent which has carried revolutionary social research to a high point. It is gratifying to find that at this moment, America, too, is making significant contributions to this field. The remarkable work in report, pamphlet and book which the Labor Research Association has been carrying on for some years is now crowned by Anna Rochester's *Rulers of America,* the first thorough analysis of finance capital in the United States done by the Marxist method.

It so happens that Anna Rochester is a Daughter of the American Revolution, a direct descendant of the man who founded Rochester, New York. But her logical mind drew a direct line from the love of freedom and the revolutionary spirit of her colonial forebears to the revolutionary struggle of the modern proletariat for a classless society. She became involved early in progressive movements and by 1910 was an active member of the Socialist Party. Her whole experience in liberal and labor movements and finally a trip around the world, when she had an opportunity to observe imperialism in the Far East directly, convinced her completely that "the teachings of Marx, as developed for the imperialist era by Lenin, offered the only scientific solutions for the multiplying social and economic contradictions of capitalism."

During her seven years' work with the Labor Research Association, Anna Rochester has written a number of pamphlets and a book called *Labor and Coal.* Her new volume, *Rulers of America,* is the result of four years' intensive study and marks the highest point reached so far in American revolutionary research in this field. The new work, exhaustive and integrated, not only describes the rulers of America but illuminates the economic foundations on which the entire life of the American people rests. It should be read by everybody who really wishes to understand our country; and if it is read in conjunction with the Webbs' survey of the Soviet Union, and Earl Browder's *What Is Communism?,* the reader will have the unique and profitable experience of seeing two worlds stand out in luminous contrast.

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Shall We Be Duped by Hitler?

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON, March 9.

THE overwhelming question which faces every decent man and woman in Britain and America today is this: are we to become the dupes of Hitler? Hitler's latest and most desperate gamble has put a heavy responsibility upon everyone who understands the elements of the international situation. I do not know what the reaction of liberal and radical opinion in America has been. But in Britain the danger that a large section of this opinion will become Hitler's best supporters is acute.

For example, every member of the British labor movement who has any understanding of the international situation has been staggered and appalled by The Daily Herald's treatment of Hitler's speech and occupation of the demilitarized zone. Both in a leading article and in a long statement by The Daily Herald's diplomatic correspondent, Norman Ewer, The Daily Herald took up the view that the British government should refuse to support France in taking any measures against Germany's breach of the Locarno treaty and should on the contrary accept Hitler's offers for pacts of non-aggression with his western and with some of his eastern neighbors. Ewer strongly advocated that the British labor movement should urge this view on the government. He ended his message as follows:

> While not condoning treaty breaking, labor is likely to take the line that there is now an opportunity for a fresh start and a new chance for a real and equitable settlement of the problems created by the blunders of Versailles. . . . And it will certainly urge that no such opportunity should be thrown away and that British policy must be decided in London, not dictated from Paris.

I do not think that it is too much to say that should the British labor movement take up such an attitude, it will betray the cause of peace and the world-wide interests of the working class.

Let us take first the question of Hitler's offers. There is one simple test to apply to them. Will he make them universal? If he will conclude pacts of non-aggression for twenty-five years, with the Soviet Union as well as with France, Britain and the smaller states which border Germany on both east and west, then of course his offer in itself is acceptable. Indeed, both France and the Soviet Union have continually urged him to do just this. It is the same with his offer to return to the League and to negotiate a new Locarno treaty. Of course, no one is going to prevent Germany from signing every kind of peace pact so long as one state and that the state upon which the hopes of the whole working class and, indeed of every decent man and woman in the world, are centered—namely, the Soviet Union—is not left out.

But Hitler's proposal is precisely to leave out the Soviet Union, to conclude peace pacts with everyone else but her. One does not even have to read his speech with its hysterical denunciations of Socialism and of everything for which we of the labor movement stand, to know what is his purpose. It is of course to secure a free hand to isolate, to attack and if he can to destroy the Soviet Union. Nothing more and nothing less than that is the purpose of everything Hitler has done and everything he has said during his whole career. It has never been difficult to deduce this fact, for he has been very frank. But this latest outbreak is the clearest of all. Its simple purpose is to secure his rear defenses by fortifying the Rhine and by making agreements with the western capitalists while he launches the entire force of Germany upon Leningrad, Kiev and Moscow.

To advocate an acceptance of Hitler's offer without insisting that it is made universal by the inclusion of the Soviet Union is wittingly or unwittingly to betray everything for which the working-class movement of the world has ever stood.

Yet horrible as it is to have to record it, neither in The Daily Herald nor in a dreadful statement which Mr. Lansbury has issued nor in the comments of liberal newspapers, such as the News Chronicle, is there one word about this condition.

Such an omission would be inconceivable if it had not happened. How it can have happened I do not pretend to know. Are these spokesmen of British labor at heart enemies of socialism and of all that the Soviet Union stands for? Or is it simply that they never think at all? In any case, the betrayal and isolation of the Soviet Union by the workers of the rest of the world would be the effect of that "fresh start" and "new chance" for which Mr. Norman Ewer pleads.

This is what an acceptance of Hitler's present offers would do. We can only trust that there are enough men and women in the British labor movement who understand the very elements of the world-wide struggle that is going on before our eyes today to prevent this appalling disaster.

Of course, Hitler's offers cannot be accepted, for neither the French capitalists nor the French workers can possibly accept them. Forced by their geographical position to stay nearer to reality, the French know that if they abandon to Hitler not only the Soviet Union but Czechoslovakia and their other allies to the east, their own fate is sealed. Hitler knows this as well as anyone. Hence the single object of his elaborate offers is to affect British public opinion. That and nothing else is why they have been made.

What, then, is the alternative? The Daily Herald, in a grossly misleading article, tells us that if we do not surrender abjectly to the mailed fist of Hitler, excuse every one of his aggressions and accept every one of his offers, the result must be immediate war.

This is utterly untrue. France is not asking us to march into the Rhine. She is asking us to do precisely what we and, above all, the British labor movement has been urging upon her for the last six months: that is to say, to apply sanctions to the aggressor. Both Mr. Ewer and the writer of the Herald's leading article spend their greatest efforts in proclaiming that sanctions are out of the question. But why are sanctions out of the question? On the contrary, if sanctions were right for the small aggressor, Italy, they are right for the great aggressor, Nazi Germany. Nor do sanctions mean war. Hitler is not ready and never will be ready to wage simultaneous war against France, Russia and Great Britain plus all the smaller powers of Europe. As a matter of fact, his financial and economic situation is extremely weak. In the opinion of every single person who knows, this is the reason why he has sprung his present coup. Hence economic and financial sanctions, which are all that France is demanding, can certainly bring him to terms.

One well informed Berlin correspondent of The London Times states the position very clearly:

> The whole performance was a bold bid by the Fuehrer to cut his way out of the difficulties which beset the regime as a result of its internal division and which are accentuated now by the growing financial difficulties. Should he succeed, Herr Hitler will have finally reestablished his leadership and have freedom of action in internal affairs he does not now possess. Whether he succeeds or not depends largely on whether English public opinion reacts to the adventure in the way he and his advisers hope it will.

This, then, is the issue. Hitler is gambling on the support of the pro-fascist forces in the British government plus the incorrigible ignorance, sentimentality and folly of many of the leaders of opinion within the British liberal and working-class movement. He calculates that these two forces together will prevent the British government from backing France in applying sanctions to him. Should he succeed, he will have won his way at last to a free hand for attack upon the Soviets.

But it is a desperate gamble. He knows perfectly well that he cannot for a moment stand up to the united forces of France, Britain and the rest of the world. He must

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and will surrender if these forces are united. If he is saved, it will principally be by those spokesmen and leaders of the British working-class movement whom he has managed to dupe.

This and nothing else is the issue which confronts us today. I cannot find words to express how urgent the situation is. Every man and woman who cares for the preservation of peace, of Socialism or indeed of any measure of democracy or of decency in government, must prevent liberal and Socialist opinion all over the world from becoming the dupe of Hitler. If they never intervene in public affairs again, let them do so today.

We must act. Above all, we must explain the situation to every single person whom we can influence.

Elevator Strike

The Meaning of the Fight

WILLIAM F. DUNNE

IN the best organized strike seen in New York for decades (excepting the series of strikes in the garment industry) elevator operators, firemen, janitors, porters, chambermaids and doormen, getting from $40 to $90 per month for shifts ranging from 54 to 90 hours per week, members of the Building Service Employes Union, some 75,000 strong, demand a moderate increase in wages, shorter hours and recognition of the union. Negro and white, Irish and Italian, Catholics, Protestants and Jews, are striking and picketing shoulder to shoulder.

In the year that has elapsed since these workers were jockeyed into accepting the starvation award of Major Henry H. Curran, they have built a union powerful enough to tie up skyscraper apartment houses and office buildings. The solidarity and militancy shown by these underpaid workers whom the realty interests—Wall Street banks and insurance companies—have looked upon as spineless menials, over wide areas of the metropolitan district is one of the wonders of this period. On the picket line and in the union defense corps these workers are not the servants in uniform to whom the landlord and tenant are always right but proletarian soldiers in a bitter clash of class forces.

The general public sees only the policemen and the pickets with placards. Take Fifth Avenue as an example. It is not, as everyone knows, a working-class district. But a walk from Washington Square to 42nd Street in the first days of the strike showed that practically every building with elevator service was picketed. On the sidewalk were pickets and police. In various doorways on both sides of the avenue were other strikers to protect the pickets. Inside the locked iron grills of the building were one or more armed thugs furnished by detective agencies. Inquiry showed that they had been given legal status by being deputized through various county or city government departments. In other doorways lurked gangsters hired by the Realty Advisory Board.

If there is violence in this strike, Mayor LaGuardia, the strikebreaking agencies which he allowed to operate without let or hindrance and the real-estate associations, must take the responsibility. If the strikers did not defend themselves from these fascist attacks they would deserve to lose.

Thousands of tenants are in sympathy with the strikers. Many of them have protested to the landlords and demanded that they grant the union demands. At 245 Fifth Avenue — a 24-story building — and other places, a committee of tenants has picketed with the union. There is a violent revulsion even among tenants of swanky apartments against the cold-blooded brutality of the landlords who denounce as dangerous workers who are asking for a $2 per week increase in wages, but who pay from $6 to $9 per day to the criminal elements acting as "guards" and scabs.

Had the leadership of the union, just before the strike, seen to it that the employes of each building circularized the tenants, setting forth their present wages and conditions and demands, there would be today a mighty mass anti-landlord movement that would guarantee *complete* victory. It must be remembered that the realty interests raise rents from time to time and issue the ultimatum—pay the increase or get out.

In spite of LaGuardia's strikebreaking statements and his assignment of more than 2,000 policemen to strike duty, there is considerable fraternization between the uniformed police and strikers. So much so that many policemen have been shifted from their usual beats—where they knew and were friendly with the building staffs—to other precincts and districts. There has been a number of instances of unprovoked police

"This elevator strike is just *ruining* my figure!" *Ernest Hainsly*

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brutality but the comparatively small number of arrests—about 150 as this is written—in such a large and important strike shows that the strikers are not using violent methods.

It is clear that organized labor and large sections of the middle class are supporting the strike. Two unions—food workers and truck drivers in the garment area—have taken positive strike and boycott action against the realty interests. The union is going to win most of its demands in decisive sections of the metropolitan area. But to guarantee a *sweeping* victory for the economic demands and union recognition it is necessary for the union officials to avoid doing anything that plays into the hands of the realty interests. First of all, President Bambrick, or Local 32-B, should repudiate the statement that he will cooperate with the District Attorney in arresting and bringing to trial members of his union accused of violence. Second, a large strike committee elected by the membership would strengthen the whole front and refute entirely the charge of the Wall Street controlled Realty Advisory Board that the strike is merely an attempt on the part of the union officials to blackjack and blackmail the landlords and the general public.

With serious organization of all sympathizers and the support of organized labor and with the two above conditions fulfilled, Wall Street will be beaten.

Six Days of Struggle

BRUCE MINTON

In trying to establish peace and happiness in the building service industry on Manhattan Island, it has seemed to us that our first anxiety must be for the people who live and work in these buildings. It is unthinkable that there should be such a thing as an elevator strike. . . . Such a thing cannot be and must not be.—*The Realty Advisory Board.*

MARCH 6.

THE landlords wail that the seventy-odd thousand elevator operators walked out without warning. The agreement between the owners and the union expired March 1—but the Realty Advisory Board had not taken the threats of strike too seriously. They had consistently ignored the registered letters sent to them by James J. Bambrick, president of the New York local of the Building Service Employes; even when Bambrick rang up at 11:30 on the evening of February 29, the Board responded to his final request for a discussion of the workers' demands as "out of the question." Besides, the requested hours and wages and talk about closed shop was "outrageous." The Realty Board took for granted that Bambrick was bluffing and they bluffed back. Now they're crying that the strike found them unprepared.

Actually William D. Rawlins, the head of the Board, and his colleagues miscalculated. Agents had scoured the city, checking up on the union, reporting back to the Board that the strike would bring out a mere handful of men scattered throughout the city—an easy target. On the face of it, the Realty Board had a good gamble: the Building Service Employes, affiliated with the A.F. of L., had been chartered less than two years ago. Since then, they had made certain demands and had forced the landlords to sign contracts in several sections of the city, notably in the garment district. But that was in the days of the N.R.A. Now that Section 7A and all that went with it had been successfully wiped off the books, the Realty Board, like other large owner-employer organizations, felt that the time had come to run the unions out of their buildings. Moreover, if they signed a new contract which conceded higher wages and shorter hours and closed shop (not to mention time-and-one-half for overtime) they would soon be forced to concede similar demands in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens.

The Board also held what they considered a trump card. They knew that if the elevator operators struck, millions would be seriously inconvenienced. Business would suffer. The "general public"—that vague category which includes everyone from the owners to the workers, from small business men and professionals to stenographers and housewives—would never, so the Board felt, tolerate a strike. Not in New York, not in the "Vertical City" with its 10,000 buildings served by elevators. Which seemed to indicate to Rawlins and his advisors that the Board would be in the pleasant position of having the support of the great majority in the brave fight against organized labor.

Just as the Realty Board underestimated the strength of the union, so they miscalculated the reaction of the "general public." The walkout paralyzed close to 6,000 buildings. Pickets marched two and two in almost every street in the apartment-house and business districts of Manhattan. The tenants reacted—but not in the way the Board anticipated. Instead, they openly sympathized with the strikers—scores that I talked to expressed themselves in no indefinite terms. Workers found new allies: middle-class people sided with them against the landlords and the realty owners. Rents are high, tenants told each other; certainly the owners of the buildings can afford to pay a reasonable wage. And when they learned that the elevator operators had received as little as fourteen dollars a week for fifty to to sixty hours work and seldom higher than twenty dollars for forty-eight hours, they were outraged. Their protests grew louder with the arrival of scabs. Thugs from the underworld of New York came into apartment houses and office buildings; when the supply ran low, strong-arm men were imported from Philadelphia, Detroit and Chicago. These scabs had no licenses to operate elevators; they had no idea how to tend furnaces — and they received $8 or $9 a day for replacing men who had been paid less than $3 and, in most cases, less than $2.50 a day for the same work. In many instances, they forced tenants to pay for transportation—after all, these men knew a good racket when they saw one. The tenants balked. Settle the strike, they insisted, give the men what they demanded, what they certainly earned and merited. Take the police out of lobbies—the strikers were peaceful and there was no need for the cordons of armed men along the avenues. Rent strikes broke out: at London Terrace, the largest apartment building in the city; at 121 West 12th Street, at Knickerbocker Village, up and down Park Avenue, hundreds in all. The Realty Board found not only a militant strike on their hands that promised to grow to immense proportions, but also the almost unanimous resentment of their tenants.

AT the offices of the Realty Advisory Board, the publicity director backed me into a corner, shaking his finger under my nose, glaring at me over his glasses. "I'm for organization—but they gave no warning. They're earning $25.70 a week. Before God, that's the average."

"Then what are they striking about?" I asked. "They want a minimum wage of $22 to $26 a week in loft buildings, $23 to $27 in office buildings. Workers in apartment houses ask for a flat raise of two dollars, which if granted would bring their scale up to $18 a week—at the outside $20. Where do you get your average——?"

He swallowed. "Listen, young man, you can't tell me my business. I say $25.70 is the average. If you don't believe it——"

"What about the request of the union to arbitrate? The Realty Board seems to be the one that is preventing a settlement."

"Arbitrate! Arbitrate *closed shop?* Not a chance. We'll fight, to a showdown." He handed me a press release. "Here, read this. That'll show you why we don't arbitrate."

I looked at the sheet. It had a lot about "this city should not be subjected to the strangle hold of closed-shop unionism" and "elevator service was of such vital necessity to the public that it should not be subject to the uncontrolled power of monopoly, at the hands of a militant union, the officers of which openly threaten and encourage force and violence."

The employers have been using the same old gags year in and year out and somehow they seem a little threadbare. The building service strike has been almost completely without violence, except for the usual attacks on pickets indulged in by the police. Accord-

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ing to police definition, it would seem, strike means violence: immediately the strike began, mounted cops and armed police appeared on the streets, charged peaceful groups, flailed about with clubs, arrested pickets for "inciting to riot" and "disorderly conduct." It's the regular procedure....

THE present strike has followed an orthodox pattern. Men on the picket line found all the familiar enemies lining up in their accustomed places to smash organized labor. Mayor LaGuardia, representing the city, led off with an edict, commanding "all departments of the city government to cooperate with the said Department of Health" and warning "all persons interfering with, or in any way hampering the said city Department of Health, its employes or any other official or employes of the city of New York." What the Mayor was trying to say was that police and other city departments should aid any attempt to break the strike. After much bustling and many loud words about the "health and safety" of the city, after a plethora of empty, dictatorial orders which no one heeded ("I shall expect the strike to end sometime today," Wednesday, March 4), the Mayor suddenly reversed his position when the Realty Board refused Bambrick's offer to arbitrate and became the great hope of moderation and impartiality ("I can't see how any reasonable person can reject such an offer"). Unfortunately for Mr. LaGuardia's coming election campaign, the strikers and their sympathizers were not disarmed by the sudden shift. LaGuardia had already done his utmost to break the strike; his police continued to terrorize pickets and to attack their lines; District Attorney William C. Dodge, had attempted to intimidate James J. Bambrick and other leading officials of the International Union, by ordering them "questioned" and thus putting them in a bad light. The Mayor had made no friends—and his policy had earned him the hate of the strikers and the contempt of the landlords.

On the second day of the strike, who should arrive on the scene but that old friend of labor, Edward McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor, right-hand man to Madam Perkins. Once, in the early days of his career as professional arbitrator, professional mediator, professional strikebreaker, he was run out of town by miners. He wasn't run out of San Francisco, but it is not healthy to go around the waterfront of any West Coast city bragging of friendship for Ed McGrady. I don't know what he's doing at the City Hall—but I know McGrady's record. If I were a striker I'd be worried so long as he remains in town. James J. Bambrick is more or less inclined to think that McGrady is "impartial." Such a misapprehension is not good for the strike.

With McGrady's arrival, the remaining reactionary forces lined up. As one would expect, the Hearst papers vied with each other to villify the strike. The Journal shrieked:

> If our Socialistic Mayor can't keep order in this city, the State can. . . . The Mayor *can* stop the disgraceful and dangerous and destructive hooliganism which has characterized the building services strike. . . . He can stop it by *backing up the police one hundred percent,* calling out the 5,000 men on the eligible list as reinforcements should they be required, and *giving the agitators and ringleaders and riot-breeders to understand that the world's greatest city is not going to be run by them.* . . . Citizens have been abused and assaulted, the aged and ill have been victimized, hundreds of buildings have been damaged and threats to terrorize the entire city have been made. [Journal's emphasis.]

There they are, the outworn bogies that William Randolph Hearst has been using to scare people for decades: the Red scare, "rioters," the sick and the aged. Hearst's forensics to the contrary, the strike committee of the Building Service Employes has provided licenses and trained men in every deserving case reported to it by the Department of Health.

When it comes to hooliganism, Mr. Hearst fell all over himself to praise Frederic Bellinger, war veteran and lawyer. Bellinger posed for the press in a tin hat, holding a double-barreled shotgun. "I have no objection to organization," he told me. "But get me straight. If one side can organize, so can the other. Now, we're only organizing the tenants for self-protection, to safeguard our old mothers and wives and children."

"From what?"

"From strikers breaking into our homes."

"Have you any instance of this happening, Mr. Bellinger?"

"Of course. That is, it might happen. Somebody told me——"

Mr. Bellinger is an insignificant publicity seeker; in essence, a vigilante. The organization of tenants into armed groups is the first step toward taking these groups out to raid union halls. Hearst has called for the vigilantes—tentatively, in a rather round-about fashion. The Daily Mirror puts it:

> **The small group of elevator strikers, led by intelligent management, are *well organized.* The eight million citizens are *not* organized. . . . They know that the 8,000,000 will take what comes. *Organization* is the thing. How do you think the veterans got their bonus? [Mirror's emphasis.]**

ON lower Fifth Avenue, I stood just inside the doorway with the little owner whose nose twitched constantly, looking out through the glass door at the pickets. A Negro and a white—the Building Service Employes draw no color line. There is no discrimination in their union. Perhaps that is why the strike is so powerful, so closely knit.

We stood there, the owner and I, watching the two march up and down. My companion snorted. "I'll hold out. They really didn't want to strike. They've been with me for years. Thugs scared 'em out——"

"And now," I remarked, "you've hired scabs."

"Scabs? I've hired men who'll run my elevators."

"Where'd you get them?"

"From an agency—Bergoff. But if I didn't have them, I'd run the cars myself. I suppose you'd call that scabbing?"

"You bet. That's just what I'd call it."

Outside I talked to the pickets. The Negro laughed when I told him what his boss had said. "That hot-air artist. When I heard the strike was on, I couldn't leave fast enough. You know what that guy wants us to work for? Sixty-five a month, eleven hours a day, twelve on Sunday. Well, we're out till we win. We're going back with closed shop and a hike in wages. The boss might as well get that into his skull."

They all say the same thing, every picket I met up and down Manhattan. Closed shop for their protection—without a safeguard, even with shorter hours and increased wages, bosses will weed out the union men, get rid of the militants. Other branches of the Building Service Employes have joined the strike in several districts—chambermaids, doormen, bellboys. More threaten to walk out. Their conditions are more oppressive, if that is possible, than those of the elevator operators: irregular hours—sometimes eight, sometimes eleven hours a day—for wages that range from $6 to $18 a week.

"Tips?" they answered me. "Not these days. A dollar a month is good. We don't want tips; we want wages, so that we can live. . . ."

THE union is solid. The rank and file are prepared to fight to the finish, confident of their leaders. So far the Bambrick forces have conducted a well-planned attack with splendid organizational skill. More and more, other unions pledge support to the strike. The Central Labor Council unanimously endorsed it; Green telegraphed encouragement. The teamsters' division of the Ladies Garment Workers Union refused to deliver goods to buildings where scabs are working. The Cooks and Waiters Union threatens to pull out its membership in hotels where elevator operators are striking and scabs have been brought in.

The strike is by no means won. It promises to develop into an even sharper, harder-fought battle than it is at the present time. Bambrick has already offered to arbitrate—to arbitrate all demands, even the closed shop. The employers refuse to do so, pointing out that closed shop is not a question that can be arbitrated; it is either granted or refused. If it is refused, union men can be discriminated against, militants can be squeezed out of jobs. Clearly, protection must be granted to union men before wages and hours can be arbitrated.

As we go to press, news comes of an agreement signed with the Prudence Company, providing for an increase of $8 a month in wages, reinstatement of 3,500 strikers and no discrimination because of strike action. But even more important was the granting of preferential shop—which means that members of the union are given preference in hiring and filling vacancies. Thus, if a build-

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ing had union and non-union men working in it, in the event of discharge of any of the men, union men would receive preference in rehiring. This approximates a closed shop agreement; it demands close scrutiny by the union that employers do not violate this provision and thus retard the unionization of buildings. It does not offer the final protection of closed shop. But in fairness to the Building Service Employes, this contract is a step in the right direction; inasmuch as, unlike most strikes, the union has not one or a few employers to deal with but literally thousands all over the city. It is worth bearing in mind that the Board, despite its activities, is no more than an organization of employers, which can interfere with the peaceful and immediate settlement of the strike but is without power to speak for its members. Each settlement must be negotiated not through the Realty Board—purely an advisory body—but must be endorsed by the membership and in other cases, with every agent or landlord not a member of the Board who might own an apartment house or an office building in which there is an elevator.

It would seem that Bambrick did not use the best judgment in offering to sign a contract which outlawed strikes for three years (the duration of the contract) as he did on the third day of the strike. Conditions change; a union loses its most vital weapon of self-defense, its one powerful threat to the employer once it abandons the right to strike when it is economically and strategically necessary to do so. Furthermore, the Building Service Employes lacks rank-and-file control, the democratic control of the union so important in building a strong organization. The rank and file must work under the new contract; the men should have the right to approve it or turn it down. As it is now, Bambrick has absolute power. With the referendum, the danger of a contract which outlaws strikes, which does not guarantee closed shop, is to a large degree obviated. Democracy in a trade union must be granted if the organization is to increase in strength, consolidate its gains.

The employers met today, March 6, in the Commodore Hotel. The flags in the ballroom covered half the wall. The landlords and agents and realty men, over a thousand of them, listened to their union-hating lawyer, Walter Gordon Merritt. They applauded his plea for funds, for support, for protection of this fair city from the violence and dictatorship of uncontrolled unionism. Closed shop, he warned—and his voice was solemn and the room was hushed — closed shop meant that the landlords face a powerful organization. Mr. Merritt opposed closed shop as contrary to the "political philosophy of our country." He is for the American system—a euphonious name for the open shop. And Mr. Merritt, in an even deeper voice full of emotional overtones, asked the public to understand his fair-minded, American position. The method advocated: refuse to hire union men, lock them out, fight organized labor.

This is the patriotism of the Right. Workers answer it on the picket line. Thousands upon thousands of union men and women in New York are fighting for better wages, better hours, better working conditions. With them is a comparatively new ally, the majority of middle-class people. It is a good combination. Both sides have much to gain, not only in the present struggle but in the vital struggles to come.

Ezra Pound, Silvershirt

READERS who have had the intention of looking into Mr. Ezra Pound's new book, Jefferson And / Or Mussolini, *will save time by reading the letter below. The essentials of that book are to be found in the letter, written two years ago to the Silver Shirt Legion of America.*

It should be noted that Mr. Pound who presumes to speak about what should be done for America has not been in this country for some twenty years. For the last several years he has been living in Mussolini's Italy and, always eager to be an original, he has asserted that he likes it.

Mr. Pound is one of the last holdouts among the American literary expatriates. Most of them have returned to America and allied themselves to a greater or less degree with the Left. Mr. Pound is perhaps the sole American writer of any distinction who can be used by an American fascist organization as an intellectual front.

The poetry of Ezra Pound was at one time one of the leading influences in American letters. It was always an aristocratic poetry, obscure and difficult and demanding a knowledge of several languages. His chief interests were in the past, in medieval literature especially. It is not surprising that he should go for his politics to similar sources.

The following letters, published for the first time, have therefore more than a passing interest as another indication that no corner of contemporary life is untouched by the growing pressure for political decision.

Via Marsala. 12-5
Rapallo, Italy.

R. C. Summerville

First copy of "Liberation" recd. yesterday. Do you see anything against amplifying S/S/ program by following propositions, or anything unamerican or unconstitutional in them.

1. That a nation should govern its money.

2. That in modern life "money" or currency is a mere fleabite, and that *credit* has superceded actual money as power, THEREFORE A nation should govern its credit. (If it don't the so called government becomes a mere farce or puppet show, worked by invisible financiers.

2. That S/S/ should attack financial tyranny BY WHOMEVER exercised. i. e., whether by international jew or local aryan.

That the secret and hidden devilment should be abolished and that the legislative bodies should once more resume the powers they were intended to exercise:

among which: deliberation and discussion of fundamental rights and wrongs of government, the nature of property, the difference between property and capital, etc.

That the plot, conscious and unconscious, manipulated by jews AND others to prevent American education from educating americans should be exposed and FOILED.

This obscurantism has penetrated every cranny of American education, from the primary schools to the Universities.

Foundations, jewish, foreign AND American have been so used as to smother economic and historic research. The Carnegie Peace Foundation eats half a million a year of income EARNED by the people, and has NEVER investigated the economic causes of war (or of ANY war).

Van Buren who was Andy Jackson's right hand man and half the brains in the war against Biddle's traitorous bank in the 1830s wrote his memoirs in 1860 and they were kept hidden, never printed till 1921 despite all the money expended on historical "research" by American universities.

3. That S/S. should face facts. That they should on all occasions attack the press-gag. That free speech is fundamental in American institutions, but that whenever constructive action takes place in a foreign country whether its institutions conform to, or are akin to our own, that action is masked and hidden from the American people, for fear it would make them THINK. As it became (after ten years) impossible to conceal Mussolini's great work for the benefit of the ITALIAN PEOPLE, he has ceased to be mentioned in the American Press and german Nazism has replaced Fascism as the grand bogey man.

In contrast to communist obscurantism we find the following points illustrative of the Italian spirit.

"A membership card in this party does not

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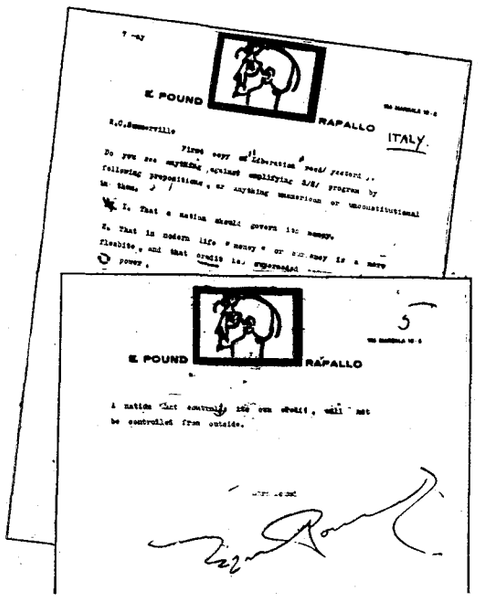

confer literary genius on its holder." Mussolini.

Last week they had a congress to discuss fascist doctrine, there was no gag law. The students said what they damn well pleased.

The last book on the corporate state that I have opened, Capaccioli's "Cenni sullo Stato Corporativo Fascista" declares the absolutely Jeffersonian objective, in perfectly plain words: A time when the state can sit back and do nothing.

These are the things which the black hand does not like to have published. American liberties will not preserve themselves, and when men are afraid to ACT, their ideas are of damned little use.

A knowledge of ECONOMICS and of economic facts and processes is however worth more than a battalion of cavalry. Marx's theory of value we understand has been superseded. ONCE the mechanism whereby the international finance has damned mankind and done its utmost to destroy every vestige of culture and civilization, the power of RedShield and Guggenguggle is cut off at the root.

Every industry, every factory under the present system produces prices faster than it emits the power to buy.

And every ten cents worth of that surplus is a link in the financiers' chain. It is ten cents onto "bonds."

Value in our time arises from the cultural heritage; that is the aggregate of all mechanical inventions, of all improvements of agriculture, and even of civilized habits. The people can maintain its liberty ONLY IF it maintains its proportionate control of this great fund of value.

All the peoples of the earth have let that control slip into the hands of Kreugers, Insulls, and Wiggins, Shiffs, Morgans, De Wendels, Schneiders; Rotschilds. etc./ and their agents and touts.

A nation that controls its own credit, will not be controlled from outside.

(you can make whatever use you like of this. I am not writing it for money, or trying to save postage.

Private/ I believe Roosevelt is honest. The best way to deal with some of his entourage is to show up their ignorance of economics as that's their claim of being there. Got rid of Sprague. Hull, Farley ought to go next. and Tugwell needs to be "eddercated" if that is possible . . . otherwise he might be more use in foreign mission field or selling oil.

Vanderlip is importing propaganda from London School of Economics faculty of which is largely middle European jew. Immense influence, and thoroughly WRONG.

EZRA POUND.

Asheville, No.Car.
May 23, 1934

My dear Mr. Pound:

Your communication of May 7th has been read most cordially by myself. Particularly am I struck by your creative virility of intelligence in the facing of the international program. You are one of us.

It is impossible and would not be of much profit for me to communicate to you the exceedingly trying circumstances through which we are laboring at the present. It is an uphill fight of the sternest variety. The movement is rapidly getting to the point where it must follow the methods of Hitler in building a *personal* organization; that is, to rely upon the entire contacting of this nation by means of pyramiding groups for each of the nine major districts of the United States, controlled instantly by our Chief, Mr. Pelley. That is the only way there can be a meeting of the grave conditions, changing almost from hour to hour, in the face of the increasing unreliability of the mails and the attempts to completely crush and thwart any specific group at a specific National Headquarters. The movement is rapidly becoming stronger than any printed literature might indicate.

It will be a great pleasure for me to hear from you again, in deep appreciation of your astute creative intelligence, and if there is any way in which we may be of help to you, we shall be most glad to cooperate with you.

Cordially

SILVER SHIRT LEGION OF AMERICA, INC.
Robert C. Summerville

Again, O Pioneers

EDA LOU WALTON

These lay their hands on mountains
Having spanned,
Clad seven-leagued, their outraged land,
Thundered to heaven, hearing thunder back,
Stiffened whatever sinews slack
Trembled before the primitive and grand.

Conquered, O Land, pressed into cornfilled plain,
Pawed into quarry, bin, and watery lane,
Plucked of your flowers, forests, native fruits;
Even your naked eagle now disputes
The people's passion and possessive reign.

Then shoot the bird, knock mountains from their base,
O pioneering race,
Ruthlessly end what ruthlessly began.
Take hawk and buzzard for your emblem, man
Who turns to stone the panther in his pace!

What stale pretense of freedom so long crowns
All your heroic ritual? Pounds
Never were pence, nor purses, hearts, nor flags
More than the staff of life. Are rags
Robes for gay ceremonials and rounds?

Were sparrow but a nightingale, could shadow leap
Past the sun's slant, you plead, and reap
Richness from rancor, prison for your pain.
Lands still divisible to sun and rain
Await the harvest, but the laborers sleep.

Should they awake whose knobby worn shoes parch
The very soil they pause on, in an arch
Terrifically move over field and town,
Towery cities rip your ribbons down,
These are the conquerors, again they march!

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The Siege of the Mills

JOHN L. SPIVAK

POLAND has always had a low living standard, but the hunger and misery is now so great and widespread that the country is seething with far greater unrest and bitterness than the world realizes. Workers, driven desperate by starvation, are occupying factories, mills and mines while the government suppresses news of it; gaunt, hungry peasants are marching upon village governments and are being mowed down with machine guns. Only a handful of the Polish people favor the government which is maintaining itself in power by force and a brutality, in some sections, quite similar to the Nazi brand.

Since Polish fascism is not as complete as the Italian or German brand, it failed to achieve one of its chief aims: making labor unions the instrument of the governing clique and prohibiting the right to strike; and as a result, strikes have swept and are sweeping the country.

The Polish government's figures on strikes, unemployment, wage scales and living costs are utterly unreliable. I found that in every fascist and semi-fascist country, official figures aren't worth the paper they are printed on. The only one, it seems, who ever pays any attention to them is the Labor Office of the League of Nations. The Polish government deliberately suppresses unpleasant figures and juggles others so as to present to a world to which it goes for financial credit, a picture of conditions better than they actually are.

Official statistics of workers embrace only plants employing twenty or more persons. Those employing fewer are not recorded, but Zygmunt Zulawski, General Secretary of the Trade Union Congress of Poland (independent unions) estimated for me that this second group "probably includes about 400,000 workers." But when we tried to figure the total number of Poland's industrial workers we were reduced to guessing. Illustrative of the unreliability of the official figures are those on unemployment. Before the world crisis, the statistics show 923,000 persons employed in industry. By 1932 (there are no figures after this date) this number dropped to 478,000 which means *almost* 450,000 *workers were added* to the unemployed. The official unemployment figures show that in 1929 there were 185,000 unemployed and by 1932 there were 220,000 or an unemployed increase of about 35,000!

This sort of juggling makes it difficult to estimate accurately the effect of the crisis upon the people, but the wave of bitter strikes and the seizure of factories tells the story even better than figures.

The most outstanding development of recent Polish labor history is the seizing and occupying of work premises by the workers —a strike tactic which prevents the importation of strikebreakers. Union leaders had cautioned their members not to be too aggressive because, as Zulawski put it, "the owner himself was having difficulties due to the crisis." The workers, however, were driven desperate by repeated wage-cuts which reduced them to a literal starvation point; and strikebreakers were drawn from the ranks of the unemployed. It was then that the workers took the desperate move of occupying the factories as a tactic to prevent strikebreakers from coming in.

Occupation strikes began in 1931 when 5,434 workers employed in four factories refused to leave their plants. The workers were evicted by the police after struggles in which people were hurt on both sides. From then on this strike tactic spread until in 1932, 55 factories employing 37,731 workers were seized and occupied.

The government tried desperately to suppress news of this type of strike, but it spread by word of mouth and the idea was quickly adopted by other workers. The government is still trying to suppress such news and only the most dramatic instances like the now world-known occupation of the Klimontow mines when the coal diggers went into the bowels of the earth and announced that they intended to starve to death in protest against their starvation wages, ever breaks through the censorship.

The fear lest news of these semi-revolutionary acts get out and effect Poland's credit in the world's money markets is evident when you speak to Polish officials. It's one of the things they would prefer not to discuss—especially the enthusiasm with which the workers adopted it and the way it is affecting the country.

In 1933, one hundred and thirty-seven factories, mills, mines and workshops, employing 45,552 workers were seized and occupied.

In 1934, two hundred and two places employing 22,974 workers, were occupied.

Figures for 1935 are not available, but Zulawski says the number of factories occupied is "much greater" than in 1934.

I TALKED with several workers who had seized and occupied factories and almost all of them told me the same story that a worker in Lodz told me.

"We did not know what to do," he said. "We knew there were many hungry ones waiting to take our jobs if we went on strike. We knew that there was great unemployment not only in Poland, but everywhere: in Germany and in Austria, in England and France and even in America. So we suffered. In some factories where they went on strike they pleaded with the strikebreakers not to take the bread out of the mouths of wives and children and they got only beatings from the police. And then" —his eyes laughed at the recollection—"we heard that in the Peltzery factory in Czestochowa 800 workers had gone on strike and refused to leave the factory. Strikebreakers could not get in to take their jobs. The workers just sat at their benches while their wives and relatives brought them food. They slept there, too, we heard for seven weeks and the factory owners and the police couldn't get them out because it would have caused a great battle.

"We told our union leaders that we proposed to do that and they shrugged their shoulders like this." He illustrated it with a shrug that brought his shoulders up to his ears. "They said if other workers could do it, so could we. So we occupied our factory here in Lodz. In this city alone there have been fourteen such strikes in the last year! We have learned one thing: if we stay inside they cannot bring in strikebreakers. And if police want to get us out they will have a good fight on their hands!"

"Weren't you worried at what might happen?"

"What could we lose?" he asked, spreading his hands out in a gesture of hopelessness. "It is better to die quickly than slowly of hunger."

SO FAR as I could learn, force to dislodge occupants of seized plants was used by the government in only one instance: during a strike in a telephone factory under government control. The occupation was considered a move against the state. In other factories, mills and mines, the efforts by local authorities to evict the workers who had barricaded themselves in the factories they had seized, created so much unrest in the community that it produced political repercussions. The sympathy of the people was invariably with the workers and the government did not want to irritate an already desperate people by using too much force. You never can tell what workers who had already committed a semi-revolutionary act might do if pressed too hard; and the government is none too strong and certainly not popular. So the authorities, worried by the unrest that invariably developed in a community where workers had seized a plant, brought pressure upon the owners to settle the strike before it resulted

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in bloody battles and created greater unrest.

How widespread this tactic is now can be seen by the different industries so affected.

The mine Mortimer: held by 600 miners for three weeks.

The "Polska," in Upper Silesia, held by eighty miners for seventeen days.

The Szczescie Luizy ("Happiness of Louisa"), held by seventy miners for five days.

The "Dorota," held by 100 miners for six days.

The "Lipno," held by 100 miners for eleven days.

Cohn's factory in Czestochowa, 300 workers held it for two weeks.

In Warsaw, workers held the factory Bracia Pawelscy. In Warsaw, too, a number of bakeries employing only a few people were seized. In each case the owner granted the demands within two days.

There is a long list of such occupations, but the above sufficiently shows how widespread it is despite the government's efforts to suppress all news of them.

When I discussed these seizures with Zulawski I told him how the occupation of the Klimontow mines was featured on the front pages of almost all American newspapers and the sympathy the plight of the miners aroused.

"They took the only means they knew to defend their right to live," he said. "That was an important strike, but there was another one with a different issue, but equally important at the Szczescie Luizy (Happiness of Louisa) in Upper Silesia. The issue here was whether coal operators who are not making any money from their property can close their mine and let their workers starve. Few coal mines in Poland are showing a profit and the owners of the Happiness of Louisa said it wasn't worth working the mine. They wanted to destroy it because running it was not profitable. The miners saw the means of even their pitiable livelihood being destroyed because of this drive for profits and they went down in a body and occupied it for several weeks. The owners could not destroy the mine with the miners in it; and eventually after government pressure, the owners agreed to continue to operate it!"

"Now, suppose the factory owner says 'All right. You occupied my factory. Stay there.' What can the workers do? If they continue working at their jobs it will not be long before all of the available raw material in the plant is used up. To whom will they sell the finished product to get money for wages and to buy more raw materials to continue working? Bankers and business men will not extend credit to them. Workers seized factories in Italy and the owners simply let them stay there and work until all the raw material was used up. They couldn't sell the finished product; they couldn't get credit and in the end they were licked."

"Usually employers do say that. But you must hear in mind that Poland is restless; the workers are desperate and occupation of a mine, mill or factory simply throws benzine on the fire. Politically it is not good for the government. News of such strikes spreads and the possibilities are too dangerous for the government and it has to intervene and arrange a settlement."

As near as I had been able to learn, what little the workers had managed to get in recent years had been gotten through their own desperation. Certain labor leaders had actually tried to restrain them. The workers themselves had inaugurated the occupation of factories. When the union leaders could not restrain them, they adopted the tactics. The government had pretty much destroyed bills favorable to labor and the unions had done little about it. The workers though organized, got wages wholly insuffiicent even for the very low standard of living of the Polish worker.

And now the workers, in a period when the government is afraid of them, are being told by their leaders that the government wants friendly relationship—this of a government subsidizing the export of coal at less than the cost of mining while the workers who mine it cannot afford to buy it; this from a government exporting sugar at an incredibly low price, while the people who grew the beets to make the sugar cannot afford to have sugar for their tea; this from a government subsidizing the export of salt while the people buy empty herring barrels and scrape them for salt because they cannot afford to buy salt in Poland!

"What do you think will happen to the Polish worker now that you think the government will do something for him?"

Zulawski stared thoughtfully at the notes I was making of the interview and sighed.

"We realize," he said slowly, "that no government today, even with good will, can solve the problem of giving the people work and food."

"But the problem must be solved—"

"Yes, but it can be solved only by a government representing the workers and peasants. We, the workers, must get the peasants, who comprise 68 percent of the population, to come with us. Only a workers' and peasants' government can settle that problem."

"Like Russia? They have a workers' and peasants' government."

"No," he said, shaking his head slowly, "we want to achieve it by democratic means."

"But history shows that when you really threaten the control of the ruling class and the government which represents this class, your right to the ballot will be taken from you. It happened right here in Poland in 1935. You used to have your political parties, but when the government saw that it would not be re-elected, it simply made your political parties illegal. Today the only candidates the people can vote for are those chosen by the government. It was in protest against this very act of illegalizing the independent political parties that the people boycotted the 1935 elections. The government, with all the pressure it could exert, managed to get a bare 22 percent of the normal number of voters to cast their ballots for the dummy candidates. Obviously, then, the people are opposed to the government, but your democratic means to change this government has been taken from you. Do you think that the ruling class will ever give up power without a fight?"

"I don't want to prophesy," he said evasively. "It is a great mistake to prophesy as to how things will turn out. First we must create the power to take over the government in a democratic fashion."

"But how," I persisted, "since the minute you get a little power you are made an illegal body?"

"First we must create the power," he repeated.

I could not tell whether he could not say more because he was, after all, in Poland where, though unions are still legal and strikes allowed, the prisons are filled with men who said less than what logic might force him to say.

"There is only one more question I should like to ask," I said as I rose to go. "Poland's population is increasing at the rate of 400,000 a year and there is no place for them to go. You have more people than you know what to do with now. What will happen in another generation—assuming that we avoid a war. The efforts to industrialize industry and agriculture means that more people will be thrown out of work because machines will take the place of countless men and women. How will you feed these additional millions?"

"The problem is not to decrease the population, but to change the distribution of what we have," he said. "Poland has enough to feed all we have and all that will come for many years. Only we must distribute what we have so that all can eat."

On my way back to the hotel I could not help wondering whether the Zulawskis and the Lupinskis, the Grubers and their like really see where they are going. All of them know history, economics. They know what has happened, what caused upheavals in the past—or didn't they know? Here was Poland crumbling before their eyes and one man thought it was due to psychologic fear, and another because the country's economy wasn't planned, but he didn't believe in planning it, and still another who cried that the mess could be straightened out by democratic means even at the moment those democratic means had been taken from him. And these are the men who are running Poland.

The simple, ignorant and illiterate workers at least know that they want food and when the Lupinskis and the Grubers could not find out a way to give it to them and labor leaders of Zulawski's type could not get it for them by "democratic means," the "dark and ignorant" people simply took over the means of production until they got it.

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Emancipated Educators

PAUL L. MORRIS

ST. LOUIS.

LAST week more than 10,000 men and women, representing leading forces of the educational profession in every section of the country, met in St. Louis at the annual convention of the Department of Superintendence (a division of the National Educational Association). Each year it meets to discuss, debate, talk and go home, but last year at Atlantic City Charles A. Beard struck a new note when he branded Hearst one of the leading subversive agents in American democracy, whom no honest man would touch "with a ten-foot pole." But despite the demands of the liberal delegates, the convention did nothing more than present milk-and-water resolutions.

Far different is the picture presented at St. Louis last week. Speaking before an assemblage of liberal educators banded together in the newly organized John Dewey Society, Professor George S. Counts of Teachers College, Columbia, laid down a barrage that may prove one of the most decisive factors in turning the tide of educational reaction in this country. Giving names and citing facts, he warned American teachers and parents to guard themselves against the insidious influences of William Randolph Hearst, Frank Belgrano, Alfred E. Smith, Father Coughlin, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Liberty League.

> Hearst uses the old public-utility device of pinning the Communist, Bolshevik label on anyone whom he does not like. Name calling is his special weapon. His notoriously dishonest attempt to label the colleges of the country as Communist is evidence of his duplicity and subversive methods. Hearst is assailing freedom of assembly, speech and press and of moving pictures and radio.

Alfred E. Smith, having "sold out to privilege," has now become the "arch enemy of true education and of all forces working for a finer life of the common man." Father Coughlin is "a past master of vague generalization." The Daughters of the American Revolution have betrayed "the spirit and devotion of their fathers." Theirs is a "thinly-veiled snobbery and protection of privilege." And as for the American Liberty League, the DuPonts, Morgans and Raskobs therein "apparently think that the Revolution was fought to make Long Island safe for polo players."

Dr. Counts told the cheering audience that "the American Liberty League characterizes all those who believe in a real liberty set forth in the Declaration of Independence, as Reds, Bolsheviks, or Communists."

This forthright speech set the pace to the convention, sweeping the more timid superintendents into a stronger position. While it is true that the resolutions finally adopted did not come up to the promise set by Dr. Counts, nevertheless they represent a distinct victory for the liberal forces in the American schools and colleges. Dr. Charles A. Beard continued the fine work started by Dr. Counts. In a speech filled with scholarly brilliance, he warned that the fascist reaction now closing up the founts of controversial discussion in many schools would tend to sink American education to the level of that found in Italy or Germany. Communism, true knowledge about Russia, the realities of our sordid political picture, all must be dissected and analyzed in the classroom if we are to maintain our pretense of democracy.

Dr. Beard followed up this talk with a pointed telegram to Governor Alfred Landon of Topeka, Kansas, in which he said:

> A number of American educators who have followed your career with deep interest would like to ask you one question: "Are you proud to be sponsored by William Randolph Hearst?"

Following this action, George A. Davis, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers, wired this Republican presidential aspirant asking if he had balanced his Kansas budget by "reducing funds for education and human relief." Citing the notoriously low salaries paid Kansas school teachers and administrators, Davis asked "if elected president of the United States, would you approve balancing the federal budget by similarly restricting education for American children and relief funds for American families in need?"

Willard E. Givens, executive secretary of the National Education Association, and Clyde R. Miller of Teachers College and of the executive board of the Progressive Education Association, endorsed the telegram. Commenting on the fact that the N.E.A. had backed the Teachers' Federation on this issue, Mr. Givens said, "we must all stand together"—a remarkable advance in the form of a united educational front.

Meanwhile Jouett Shouse, president of the American Liberty League, resenting Dr. Counts' indictment of his organization, challenged him to prove his allegations. The American Liberty League "is committed to the principles of free speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religious worship, the right of peaceable assemblage as basic tenets of American liberty. It upholds the rights as belonging to every citizen, no matter how humble."

Professor Counts immediately wired back instances requested by Mr. Shouse:

> You and your lawyers, representing great property interests have attacked several great statutes enacted by present government to cope with economic crises and protect basic economic liberties of the people. Have you intervened in any one of many cases during the past twelve months involving freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of assemblage, freedom of religious worship, freedom of thought and teaching, right to fair trial of working men?

Dr. Counts cited numerous cases: Tom Mooney, Angelo Herndon, the Scottsboro boys, the Gauley Bridge silicosis deaths and instances of more than seventy American workers shot or beaten to death during labor disputes throughout the country in 1935.

"The American Liberty League has the jitters," Dr. Beard said in commenting on what he called "the most significant event of the convention," Shouse's reply to Dr. Counts. "Once you introduce education into the American Liberty League, it will quickly disintegrate."

In another part of the convention a tri-cornered debate took place between former Governor Henry J. Allen of Kansas, Republican; Senator Albin W. Barkley of Kentucky, Democrat; and Norman Thomas, Socialist. Ex-Governor Allen got off on the wrong foot when he evidently tried to soft-soap Thomas by saying he did not regard him as "an objectionable Socialist," and that the Socialist leader might even be of value as "giving some of you a slight inoculation producing a varioloid that will make you immune from real socialism." Thomas replied indignantly that the Socialist program included "compensation and taxation amounting to expropriation in the upper levels." He declared that "Russia has made real progress in making the machine work for society." In the words of The St. Louis Post-Dispatch: "Thomas, opening the program, took a lead in the audience's favor which neither the former Governor Allen nor Senator Barkley succeeded in taking away from him. By the time the three had finished their speeches the applause had made it evident that Thomas had stolen the show."

At Atlantic City last year even a mild resolution on academic freedom was hooted down by the assembled delegates; at St. Louis precisely the opposite occurred. Payson Smith, Massachusetts Commissioner of Education for the last nineteen years, was not reappointed by Governor Curley because, it has been learned, the Commissioner refused to make a deal with the Governor which included reappointment if Dr. Smith would let Mr. Curley fill thirty-five jobs in the Massachusetts educational system with his own political appointees. Self-appointed Red-baiters in the American Legion, goaded by Hearst, were also after Smith's scalp because of his stand against teachers' loyalty oaths. Pressed by the liberal members of

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the Department of Superintendence, who were shocked by this disclosure of corruption, brought in a resolution denouncing the political interference in this case. They declared that documented facts on the dismissal made it "difficult to realize that this ever could have happened here in America."

It is true that for every superintendent or educational commissioner fired for political reasons there are at least one hundred classroom teachers fired for the same "offense." But while the Department of Superintendence did not take an active stand in support of the dismissed classroom teachers, nevertheless this outspoken defense of one of their own was a distinct victory for the liberal forces at the convention.

The superintendents furthermore adopted a resolution stating that "we recognize that many of the most critical problems facing the American people today are economic in nature." The principle of tenure for classroom teachers was accepted for the first time in the history of the Department. Adult education is now to be recognized as a function of the public school system. Further, the public school should provide a program which will recognize the needs of youth between the ages of 18 and 25. More federal funds should be allocated to the public schools of this country.

Dr. George D. Strayer of Teachers College presented a "deadly parallel" in the educational life of today, citing our promise to youth, as recorded in the Children's Charter, and our performance, as shown by actual accomplishments. Millions of children are denied adequate educational opportunities, despite the vast potential resources of this country. He also stressed the "fascist" trend in education, embodied in federal control over education through the C.C.C. set-up, the National Youth Administration and other governmental agencies.

Freedom from politics was stressed as well as an interpretation of academic freedom which permits the teacher "complete liberty of political conduct and thought to which he is entitled as an American citizen" and which at the same time obligates the teacher to present all available facts in controversial issues to provide a realistic and accurate picture of American life and problems. Carrying out the practical application of this program, the executive committee of the Department of Superintendence voted an endorsement of the Sisson Bill pending in the House of Representatives which would remove the present rule forbidding school teachers in Washington from teaching or advocating Communism.

The Department of Superintendence's 1936 Yearbook, presented at the convention and adopted almost unanimously, made a powerful defense of the right of teachers to discuss controversial issues in the classroom and to discuss all sides of current topics. It marked a decided step forward in the liberation of American education from the stranglehold of vested interests and minority pressure groups. This social-studies curriculum, of which Dr. Counts and Dr. Beard are members, laid down as fundamental principles the right of all classroom teachers to conduct their classes free from political or partisan interference. Distressed by the tenor of this yearbook, over which the executive committee had control, it urged a resolution to discontinue future publication of such books. The proposal to abolish such documents in the future was voted down almost unanimously. It was with a rude awakening that the reactionary leaders realized that the rank and file of the Department had gotten out of their hands.

From almost every standpoint this St. Louis meeting was one of the most significant conventions held since the days of Horace Mann. It was truly heartening to all lovers of democracy to find speaker after speaker—educators of national reputation—rising to the defense of teachers in their fight against the Hearsts, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Liberty League. Fascist groups in this country have received an acute setback. And there is evidence the educators will continue the offensive during the coming year, keeping the forces of fascism on the run.

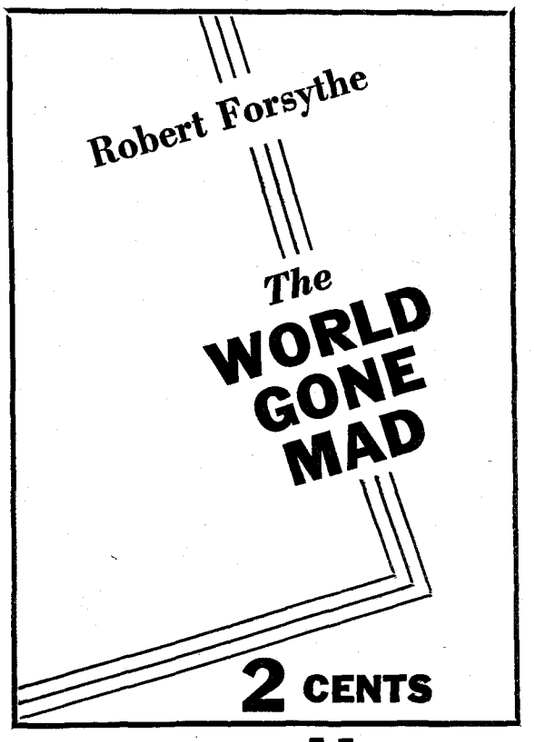
Loyalty oaths as one expression of the rising tide of fascism in this country were roundly denounced by educators at many panel discussions and symposiums held during the week of the convention. William McAndrew, ousted as school superintendent of Chicago because he refused to kowtow to the political whims of the then mayor, Big Bill Thompson, made a stirring defense of the school teacher in the fight against the loyalty oath. Now an editor of School and Society, he presented his own loyalty oath, including in part:

> I swear to defend the equal rights of citizens to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I swear in accordance with American right and duty to favor a change in government when government fails to secure these rights.

Every believer in the united front movement should be heartened by the excellent advances made at St. Louis. Traditionally a conservative body with little or no root in the soil of the laboring classes, with entangling interests interwoven among the bankers, businessmen and moneyed groups of the community, the Department of Superintendence has stepped forward into the realities of American society today. As was made perfectly clear in one of the debates, if an educator of national standing can be ousted on a flimsy political pretext, what can the $5,000 a year superintendent from Needles, California, or the $2,500 a year administrator from Yuma, Arizona, expect?

You asked for it!

Here it is:



"THE WORLD GONE MAD," by Robert Forsythe, aroused intense interest when it was first published in The New Masses. It was praised far and wide as a fine presentation of the world chaos existing today and the way out. Dozens of readers urged us to reprint the article in pamphlet form. We have done it, and here it is!

"THE WORLD GONE MAD," by Robert Forsythe, a 12-page pamphlet, published by The New Masses, may be obtained at 2 cents a copy (postage extra) from the

NEW MASSES
31 EAST 27th STREET NEW YORK CITY

Readers are urged to get any number of these pamphlets and distribute them to their friends. They make excellent mailing pieces.

Write for special rates on larger bundles

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Our Readers' Forum

A Swing Enthusiast

One of your newest features, the department on music, was not only a surprise, but a real treat and delight. Most of it was not new to me, since the good fortune has been mine, to have written music for the bands of which Johnson spoke.

His promise to list the best records in the future will really be a help to many of the lovers of swing music who are very often misled by the publicity sheets put out by the recording companies. I have yet to hear a Benny Goodman or Fletcher Henderson or Louis Armstrong or Duke Ellington record that fails to delight the swing enthusiast. And yet there are so many people, who despite their love for swing music, seem only to know of the mechanical Casa Loma, Dorsey or Noble orchestras, expressing surprise when told about such outfits of *real* swing, such as . . . Red Norvo, Teddy Wilson, and Fats Waller.

I'm sure Johnson will lose no time in pointing out and revealing many things pertaining to music and musicians, heretofore unmentioned anywhere.

GEORGE BASSMAN.

"Jazz Is Empty Music"

Regarding the article on "The Development of 'Swing'" by Henry Johnson. I believe the whole business of jazz is taken too seriously. As a professional jazz-pianist I have always considered it as some sort of an organized racket on the false basis of its being a neglected branch of the higher arts. The business—and it is nothing else but a business—is conducted by a group of musicians inferior in ability, who could do nothing better if they tried to.

I am referring to the composers and publishers whose sole aim seems to be in getting the Almighty Dollar. Songs are hatched as fast as they can be printed. They come and go so quickly that the ordinary fellow who makes his living playing them finds it impossible to remember them. This was not so about ten years ago when a song would stay on the market for about six months. The profit motive is the leading influence today, as it was then, but on a sharper basis.

The publishing houses take their jazz seriously. The establishments have become metamorphosed into bizarre salons with all the dignity and gravity of funeral parlors. Ere jazz became the Schubertian lyric it is considered today, they were tickled to death to hand out orchestrations to anyone who would simply promise to give the song a plug. Try and get one today. You will be told that the free list has been discontinued; orchestrations are fifty cents each.

The explanation is simple. Jazz, as it is practised by these mazuma-mad musicians, is a lucrative racket. From the smallest song-plugger to Jerome Kern, who still continues writing this tripe (he controls one of the biggest publishing firms on Broadway), the main interest lies in making as much money as they can from the masses who buy the songs and from starving musicians who are forced to buy the orchestrations in order to get dance jobs.

Jazz is still empty music. It is the product of a decaying civilzation, wherein the money-making instinct is intrenched even in its "greatest" songwriters. The people who dance to it will some day realize that jaz was manufactured for them as just another soul-soother.

IRVING SCHLEIN.

Headquarters on Wheels

We are in search of an old farmhouse we can use as a base of operation and research in connection with the building of the Farmer-Labor Party. We want to equip a covered wagon auto to travel over the back roads of Vermont, distributing Farmer-Labor literature and speaking in village and Grange halls, and making a survey of the Vermont farm situation, working out from such a farm. Will any reader who is interested in assisting us, please communicate with Jack Wilgus, 249 North Main Street, Barre, Vermont. This is a suggestion to readers which may result in a constructive as well as pleasurable way of spending the spring and summer "far from the madding crowd."

Barre, Vermont JACK WILGUS.

A Cure for Prejudice

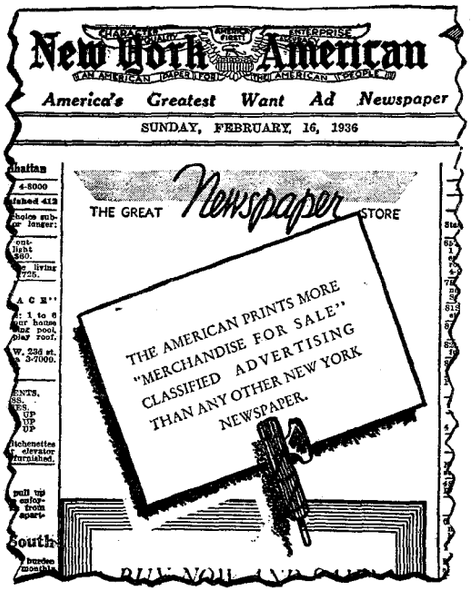
College professors are not the only recipients of the bounty of The National Republic, the fascist publication exposed in Alfred Hirsch's article in your issue of March 10. About five months ago history teachers—I am one of them—in the New York City high schools also began to receive The National Republic free of charge. In addition we get weekly bulletins on "subversive radical activities" and patrioteering suggestions on how to teach Americanism of The National Republic jingo brand.

I have always been liberal in my political philosophy, but a steady dose of this fascist organ awakened me with a bang. You cannot fight the viciousness and stupidity of The National Republic with liberalism. I began to read THE NEW MASSES to get the other side of the story. Today I am a radical and grateful to Walter Steele, Dr. Dorsey and the other luminaries of that Red-baiting sheet for unwittingly showing me the light. However, I do not underestimate the danger of circulating such distortion of the truth and such hysteria among the members of the middle class. It is up to us to spread the counteracting influence of THE NEW MASSES in this group.

The February, 1936 issue of The National Republic congratulates the University of Pittsburgh for being blacklisted by the American Association of University Professors following the dismissal of Professor Turner. "Hurrah for the University of Pittsburgh. Let more institutions follow its stand—and the threatened revolution might never take place." In the same issue there is an editorial on Mary Heaton Vorse's *Footnote to Folly,* with particular stress on the famine the author found in Russia—"children shriveled beyond recognition," etc. Two important facts I read in the book are carefully ignored. First, the time referred to is *not the present,* but 1918 and 1919 just after the World War, when the same famine conditions existed throughout all of Central and Eastern Europe. Second, the children of Russia and of Hungary (at that time also a Communist country) starved longer than those of Germany and Austria because the American Relief Administration, for *political* reasons, delayed in furnishing relief to Communist lands.

Shades of that Great Humanitarian, Herbie Hoover—The National Republic's pride and joy!

TEACHER.


New York American
America's Greatest Want Ad Newspaper
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY, 16, 1936
THE GREAT Newspaper STORE
THE AMERICAN PRINTS MORE "MERCHANDISE FOR SALE" CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING THAN ANY OTHER NEW YORK NEWSPAPER.

A reader who sends us the clipping reproduced above wants "to know why Hearst chooses to use the fasces—Mussolini's party symbol—to advertise the virtues of his so-called American."

What? No Dictaphones?

Congratulations! That last Spivak article on Nazi Germany scored a bull's-eye. And you can take that from Aryan paradise direct.

You may perhaps know that there are special short-wave broadcasts every day from Germany to America. These programs addressed to the American continent as a whole are designed in particular to fan the nostalgia of German Americans and are interspersed throughout with reference to United States policy towards the Reich.

Well, tonight I listened in on station DJC—Berlin, Germany. As the closing remark on the day's program, the announcer referred in English to an article on Germany he had read in Current Review—an article condensed fom THE NEW MASSES—an article by a fellow named Spivak. The article was just a pack of lies and fairy tales. Spivak was just—"a dirty fellow." If Mr. John Spivak returned, the announcer—his nickname is Ribi—would volunteer to prove to him that dictaphones are not planted in hotel rooms.

The announcer then asked all friends of Germany to bring pressure on the American government to prevent such articles which endanger the good and peaceful relationships of the two countries.

That, of course, would be quite a simple matter if America were coordinated like the Reich.

GEORGE KAIT.

Marxism and Freudianism

I have just finished reading the fourth volume of Vardis Fisher's tetralogy, the volume called *No Villain Need Be.* On pages 348-358 Vardis Fisher gives his argument against Communism. His viewpoint is that of the Freudian.

Somehow I feel that his refutation of Communism is weak; but knowing nothing about Freudianism, and comparatively little of Marxism, I am not able to analyze his argument as I would like to.

I would personally appreciate it greatly and feel that most of your readers would also be greatly interested, if one of your staff could answer Vardis Fisher's argument from a dialectic viewpoint. I feel that it is of particular interest as even Auden and Spender are trying to combine Freudianism and Marxism as a solution of the economic crisis.

Thanking you very kindly, I am yours sincerely,

Berkeley, Calif. LOLA LAMONT.

It is perfectly clear that as a sensitive and suffering man—he discovered his personal plight openly in his significantly titled volume of essays *The Neurotic Nightingale*—Vardis Fisher recognizes the misery of the contemporary world and would like to look forward to a world less doomed to frustration. In that respect his aims tally with that of the revolutionary movement.

In an early issue we shall publish a review which Jack Conroy has prepared on Vardis Fisher's new volume. Conroy does not concentrate on the problems of Marxism and Freudianism, but limits his discusion to the literary aspects of Vardis Fisher's work. However, we fully agree with Miss Lamont that a full discussion of the subject would have interest and value. We hope to publish such an article in a forthcoming issue.—THE EDITORS.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Whose Bad Taste?

RECENTLY the Chemical Foundation of New York, a capitalist propaganda organization, ordered 20,000 copies of *America Strikes Back* by Gustavus Myers. This book, which the Foundation will probably present to the public libraries of the nation has the following thesis: There is greed and graft in America, but so is there also in sneering Europe, and it was there first. And while America has Senate investigations and other mechanisms of public confessional, Europe hides its sins. The only moral discernible in this fatuous book is that human depravity is universal.

Now what can be the motive of a capitalist propaganda organization in spreading this libel upon humanity? Today, and for several generations, the ruling classes in capitalist nations have had one dominant interest—to maintain the *status quo*. If graft incites a movement for social reorganization, let it be put to rest by faith in human depravity. Let the people be cynical and resigned. Let it be believed throughout the land that human nature is unchangeable. Let such notions as the intelligence tests, though repudiated a thousand times by reputable scientists, prevail through the land so that with the intelligence of the average man fixed at that of a twelve-year-old there can be implanted in the minds of the masses a demoralizing sense of inferiority. It would be startling to study the files of the Hearst press for instance to note how many articles on the intelligence test have appeared there.

A corollary of all this is the belief that, culturally, the common people must be left like water to seek its lowest level. This is its inalienable right, respected, with touching scrupulousness, by the Messrs. Hearst, Macfadden, Paul Block and the other masters of the public prints in America. It is not their taste, they assure you, that is imposed on the public; rather, the public holds them up with a mythical, lethal weapon called "popular demand" and forces them to produce low-grade stuff. Thus, in addition to the general motive of capitalism, to tolerate and even promote whatever will have the effect of keeping people acquiescent there is the specific motive of the capitalists who have run up the business of providing lowest level literary culture into a major industry. They have no interest in changing what has brought them profit and power.

I have mentioned several ideas that have been informally used as the apologetics for the general demoralized state of the capitalist social system and the low state of its mass culture. One is that human nature is unchangeable, with its implication that class divisions are therefore permanent. Another is the idea, fostered by the intelligence tests, of the moronic character of average humanity, thus not only justifying the production of lowest-level culture, but by the derived implications, justifying the domination by a "superior class." A third idea, spread in the schools and until recently generally accepted among intellectuals, and complementary to the other notions, is that the spread of literacy and the democratization of culture inevitably reduced the level of culture. It was stated that culture is a leisure-class product and, sad but true, leisure is the product of class inequality and exploitation; further, that the masses are incapable of producing culture; therefore if we think culture desirable we must resign ourselves to its inescapable concomitants, inequality and exploitation.

The thesis has this much to support it; that an examination of individual culture-producers, the artists, indicates a majority derivation from the comfortable classes. Nevertheless a few do show proletarian origin, though these, like Blake, Burns, Chatterton, John Clare and others, to mention only examples among the English poets, are almost all to be found on the darker side of literary history, among the madmen and the suicides, men broken by the economic struggle. These examples would show that there is enough creative force among the masses to emerge in spite of the drowning weight of its disadvantages.

But is it necessarily true that leisure classes produce culture? History records a considerable number of societies with powerful and privileged leisure classes that produced inferior culture, if they may be credited with culture at all. Among the earliest established peoples supporting a large and wealthy leisure class were the Carthaginians. Their culture, from what evidence of it exists, was mediocre. Sparta, in the great days of Greek civilization, was an aristocratic state with a leisure class supported by slavery, yet it produced no culture and fostered a way of life hostile to culture. The conquests of Alexander left inheriting Greek minorities as the privileged and ruling castes in Egypt and Asia Minor; nevertheless Greek culture there, declined into pitifully decadent forms. Imperial Rome, for centuries mistress of the western world, produced little culture of its own; and as the principal consumer of culture in its time, seems to have been chiefly instrumental in lowering the level of taste, its bourgeoisie ranking as perhaps the most Philistine in world history. Our own plantation gentry in the South, whatever may be claimed for its "way of life," has produced no palpable culture.

On the other hand a great folk art, from which artists of the upper classes have drawn as from an inexhaustible reservoir, has come out of the working masses all over the world. For example there are the folk arts of the Mexican Indians, of the Congo tribes whose sculpture had become the inspiration for some of our greatest contemporary western sculptors, of the peasant masses of Europe surviving from the mediaeval ages whose masterpieces are in considerable degree works of mass art. In our own country, side by side with the culturally-sterile white leisure classes of the South, lived the Negro masses producing, in spite of unfavorable conditions, notable folk arts. There is thus abundant historic evidence that culture does not necessarily require an exploiting leisure class as its producing factor; and the almost universal occurrence of folk art is a further evidence, to say nothing of the presence of great artists of proletarian origin in bourgeois culture, of the rich creative powers of the masses.

These items, therefore, in the indictment *against the masses* as the responsible factor in the decline of the cultural level under capitalism, do not stand analysis. The cause must be found elsewhere. It must be remembered that under capitalism culture became a commodity subject to the profit motive. What is the nature of profit? It is to subordinate everything to profit, whether it be intrinsic quality, or extrinsic social values. It proceeds by taking all the advantages it can of these two factors in production, the producer and the consumer. In the production of reading matter it proceeds by exploiting the writer and the reader.

There has been considerable research on the general subject of the exploitation of the consumer under capitalism. It has been proved that the consumer is consistently overcharged, and that he is deceived in the representation of goods. Furthermore his weaknesses are all taken advantage of in making sales to him. The advertising, that is the primary salesman of goods in capitalist countries, is expertly directed against human weaknesses—vanity, selfishness, cupidity, indolence, lust, etc. Through this and other elements of its sales mechanism, capitalism works overpoweringly to corrupt the whole people.

This is most consistently and subtly practised in providing reading matter for the masses. Because of the frustrated sexual lives of the vast majority of people who must postpone marriage and who, in marriage, live an exhausted and insecure life, the majority of people are notoriously weakminded about sex. That weakness is played upon with al-

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most surgical finesse. Reality is hard to face and people seek evasions and dream refuges; these, though they act as opiates, are provided. The editing is done for tired people, for readers in their moments of fatigue rather for their times of strength. The famous "tired business man" is the reader type visualized in the editorial offices; the name is a polite one for the tired mechanic and the tired stenographer. Reading is never considered as an *activity;* the reading public is made to feel that it has a purely passive and receptive function. A vital and creative audience-role is given no possibility of development.

The exploitation of the primary producer of literary culture, the writer, takes different forms. In the first place writing is degraded from the beginning by the fact that it is used as an adjunct to advertising. Writing is offhandedly cut or padded to fit the requirements of the makeup, which in turn is controlled by the advertising. The advertising control is exercised not only in the physical matter of space but through a number of psychological limitations. To maintain large circulations, no interest that can affect circulation must be offended. Literature is thus devitalized to soothe the sensibilities of spinsters, patriots, and busybodies in general. Large advertisers also must not be offended especially by any sort of writing that might question, challenge or weaken capitalist control. Writers for the popular press, therefore, begin their work under conditions not only inhibitory to, but destructive of, good writing. Again the moron-notions of popular taste make for deliberate lowering of standards. Another element is the speedup in writing which works in various ways. "Rationalization," whatever may be said of it in mass production under favorable social conditions, is fatal in what is likely to remain the last type of individual production—art. The successful writer is speeded up by the bonuses of high rates, with the result that talented writers, after they make a hit, write themselves out in a few seasons. Among the "rank and file" of the writing trades the speedup is forced by the opposite factor, starvation rates. In some sections of the pulp-magazine market rates have been reduced to a quarter-of-a-cent a word, which means a ten to sixteen hour day for an unskilled laborer's income. Numbers of pulp writers have been driven by these conditions to team up and introduce a rough sort of division of labor in their work, one doing the love passages, another the settings, and so on.

These conditions make good writing for the popular press impossible. Sometimes, as in the case of Ring Lardner, genius being a hardy thing, good writing can adapt itself to the most unwholesome conditions and survive. But more often the opposite is true; good writers are allured into the million-circulation magazines, or to Hollywood and rapidly degenerate. The fact is so fully and tacitly recognized that when literature is spoken of, or the word writers is used in any honorable sense, it is understood that the literature and the writers of the shrinking book market are meant. But these serve less than a half of one percent of the population in the United States and this market of the leisured section of the nation supports no more than a handful of its writers, most of whom must take their living in other and, artistically, dangerous ways. To all this we must add the demoralized character of capitalist life as a whole, where civic conscience is dead, where the most consistent ethical principle is, "anything goes if you can get away with it."

Finally, for the purpose of instructive contrast, let us take a look at the one society where the profit motive has been abolished and social motives rule in the production of culture. There is no space here to go into detail; but barring Hearst and emigré reports, the evidence all seems to be that the highest, not the lowest, level is sought in the Soviet Union; and the mass demand for the best, in this socialist society, far exceeds what is supposed to be the mass demand for the worst in capitalist society.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

The Hunger-Fighters' Next Battle

WHY KEEP THEM ALIVE?, by Paul de Kruif, in collaboration with Rhea de Kruif. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $3.

THIS is the dramatic story of one of America's most renowned and popular —not to say pampered — intellectuals who discovered that for years a corrupt, vicious and altogether inhuman society had been fooling him: even that, for just as long he, with incredible self-satisfaction and pride, had been fooling himself. Paul de Kruif, romantic herald of the great names and honorable achievements of medical science, was challenged by "honest, cantankerous, deep-seeing Ezra Pound" to look that society full in the face, to submerge his complacent ego in the cleansing waters of direct contact with its myriad horrors. He did so: after the first flinching recoil he proceeded also to rip from its putrescent body the shimmering gilded tinsel of pomp and circumstance—and now, in a volume blazing with anger, warm with compassion for needless human suffering, edged with deadly sarcasm—every barb dipped in the caustic solution of exact knowledge: Paul de Kruif takes his revenge.

Why Keep Them Alive? might well be described as the medical counterpart for America of Zola's world-famous political document, *J'Accuse!* The tone of the book, and a big reason why it will be read by thousands for whom *Microbe Hunters* and *Seven Iron Men* are just pleasant memories, is set by the following passage. The author has just been describing the remarkable tannic acid cure for third-degree burns as developed by Dr. Edward Davidson of the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit: a remedy so effective that thousands of screaming victims (most of them children, but including large numbers of chemical and metal workers) are completely restored; so simple that it can be applied at home, often with the aid of a brew of strong tea. Appalled by the discovery that hundreds of the sufferers lack tea to brew, or gas to brew it on, de Kruif sets out on a voyage of medical inspection. And he writes:

> **What the devil was the use of my making an excellent living going on telling about death-fighting discoveries when I now knew that thousands were dying simply because they hadn't the wherewithal to pay for them? . . . Why all this death in the midst of life-giving science? Why all this gaunt-bellied, red-nosed want in the midst of so-called overproduction?**

So, on the initial stimulus provided by Ezra Pound and the Social Credit theories of Major Douglas, de Kruif proceeds to study, at first-hand, the actual life of the American masses—and to compare the monotonous, slow horror of this life, subject to every form of disease, destitution and outright physical agony, with the brilliant promises of health, abundance and security dangled before our eyes by Science. Dangled always just beyond the reach of all but the criminal few for whom science, like human beings, like the whole of nature, is a matter of dollars, dividends and planned destruction. Scouring the country between New York and the industrial centers of Ohio; stopping his car in dozens of obscure towns and villages; pestering scores of physicians, health inspectors, research workers, government officials, welfare and relief authorities; probing, questioning, challenging slick reports and misleading statistics—Paul de Kruif gets at the facts which have made the wonderful work of his "men against death" so barren of human consolation and social value.

This—in barest outline—is what he found:

In Pennsylvania—flatly contradicting the cynical optimism of Dr. Haven Emerson and U.S. Public Health Service executive Dr. Palmer — there are counties in which the mal-nutrition of children nearly doubled in one year, from 1932 to 1933. In "one of the most prosperous small cities" of this State a volunteer health investigation revealed an appalling death-rate among school children from diphtheria, plus an agonizing skin disease, incipient blindness—and an incessant hunger, which many of the teachers attempted to alleviate out of their own wretched salaries: "Of course, they're all hungry," remarked one teacher with a quiet simplicity, "but we can only feed the ones that look hungriest." It is known that by immunizing 60 percent of a community's children with the readily available antitoxin discovered by William Park, epidemics of diphtheria can be prevented. But in the wealthy state of Pennsylvania (residence of the Mellons), in 1933, *only* 20 *out of every*

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hundred children under six were immunized.

Further afield, in Michigan, exposure to diphtheria, tuberculosis, smallpox and scarlet fever is a constant menace to a working population thousands of whom are on a relief budget of $1.90 per week for each child of 17 and under. The death-rate has trebled from 1926 to 1933—even as the wages declined and the jobs disappeared. Westward again to Detroit, stronghold of the mass-production and mass-starvation industries, the "people's death-fight"—thanks to the efforts of Drs. Gudakunst, O'Brien and Evans—gained a few victories over tuberculosis and sharply reduced the mortality from diphtheria. But these triumphs have not prevented Detroit from becoming the ninth state in the number of suicides, nor made any inroads upon the colossal problem of industrial diseases, accident hazards and criminal negligence faced by the workers. And, for lack of $200,000 a year (the hundred and seventy-fifth part of the cost of a battleship) medical science is unable to do its part in abolishing this white plague from the city of Henry Ford.

Read de Kruif's bitter chapter, "Drouth Is a Blessing," to understand the full social horror of a system which literally welcomes a natural, calamity as a "way out" of its intolerable contradictions. Cattle dying, and destroyed by the thousands; farmers and their families denying themselves the milk which must be sold in order to obtain a relief on which they starve anyway; children dying slowly of heart-break (known also as rheumatic fever), wasting away within reach of forbidden food and doubly forbidden science. Read about "Who Owns Our Science" to understand why this intellectual, turned reporter, saw first pink, then carmine, then a deep red; why smug "experts" suggested a trip to Moscow for "this burning Bolshevik wanting-to-tell-all-of-it"; why, at the end of his 18-months' sojourn in a hell that would have beggared the imagination of a Dante, this Dutch-American Hotspur wanted "to tell about these things in the strongest and truest words to as many millions of people as possible; to foment, stir up, to fan more and more mass-anger . . ."

Clearly—as de Kruif himself frankly recognizes—the reaction of a man who for forty years actually knew nothing about the world he lived in—and cared less. Those great titans of whose lives and discoveries he wrote so charmingly—the Pasteurs, Kochs, Warner-Juareggs, Reeds and Noguchis—could rest secure in the knowledge that posterity would presently erect to them the one monument they could understand and value. The monument of a society in which their science—all science—would function as a dynamic, and life-giving possession of all human beings, from such fragile beings as the Dionne quintuplets (of whom de Kruif gives one of the most brilliant accounts thus far published) to the lustiest worker on duty at the largest blast furnace or rolling mill in the country.

So de Kruif, placid admirer of Saint Francis of Assisi, faintly contemptuous observer of suffering from railroad coach and motor-car, believed. Utterly devoid of clear, well-based economic knowledge, self-consciously ignorant of such plebian things as the class struggle, politically undeveloped—but with a fine capacity for using his own eyes and a sincerity capable of meeting the challenge of reality, he finally faced his world. And he found it a thing of evil, a monstrous, Janus-headed contradiction, one face that of Caliban looking backward into a night of inexpressible despair, pain and brutishness; the other that of Prospero and Ariel combined, radiant with health, overflowing with creative energy . . .

Having seen this; having dived below the irridescent scum of our Dead-Sea civilization and brought up a gruesome, misshapen horror, Paul de Kruif turns left: towards the face of Prospero. And

> Now [he writes], I saw what I must do. I must learn how to tell people about the miracle that science plus love can work on children that are so sick, so hopeless, so utterly desolate. I must forget about trying to convince the haves who don't give a damn for the children of the have-nots so long as their own children are husky. I saw the chance now to begin to talk to the growing millions of the have-nots, to the mass of the hungry. They're ignorant, yes. They haven't the tear-gas bombs nor the machine-guns. These are in the hands of the army, the navy, the police, the marines, the militia, who are at the command of the Government, which is in turn in the hands of the abundance-controllers, who amid all of our now possible plenty, have got to keep one thing scarce, only one, only one thing expensive, and that one thing is wherewithal. . . . No, the human mass is ignorant. It is unarmed. But it is more and more numerous, and while there may be spurts of prosperity again, yet the numbers of the enslaved, moneyless mass will some day be overwhelming. . . .

More than a generation before U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace hailed the drouth as "a blessing in disguise" (thereby exciting the bitter scorn of de Kruif, who watched how the children died of it), an obscure Russian, in a study of Agriculture, wrote, "It has not become more difficult to produce food; it has become more difficult for the workers to obtain it."

That Russian was Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin. Perhaps, after all, the "expert" who jeered at Paul de Kruif was right. Perhaps he will find the one and only answer to his question, Why Keep Them Alive?—in Moscow, in that Union of Soviet Socialist Republics where "the human mass" is no longer either ignorant or unarmed . . .

HAROLD WARD.

John Strachey says

"I believe that a principal task for our movement during 1936 is to explain and popularize what the Soviet Union is doing on a quite new scale. That great new book, 'Soviet Communism,' by Mr. and Mrs. Webb gives us a marvelous foundation upon which to work. Everyone of us must not only read it, but master every word of it, for this book equips one like nothing else for the task of explaining the significance of the Soviet Union."

New Masses, January 14th, 1936

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The Impartial Young Man

INHALE AND EXHALE, by William Saroyan. Random House. $2.50.

SAROYAN is a poet of invalid temperament, pensive, self-communing. His life is a trance in which voiceless objects, penumbral sensations, dreams, emotions in their primitive stirring, simple affections and the caricatures of things ill-seen, come to him in equal incompleteness. He tells about them in terms which range from the gay, supple, simplicity of the folktale ("The Black Tartars"), the poetry of personal apocalypse ("Hymns and Psalms") the ingenious backing and filling of dramatic conversation ("The Barber Whose Uncle Had His Head Bitten by a Tiger"), the ludicrous philosophical pretensions of "Poem, Story, Novel," to the stilted, almost ritual, incoherence of "Resurrection of a Life."

This trance is known to all of us: it is between sleeping and waking. In it the simplest phenomena of life have exaggerated importance. Saroyan knows so little and gives himself so little to think about that his attention has become fixed on bodily functions, like a convalescent; and he is excited by inhaling and exhaling. He attempts to build up a philosophy and integrate himself on it. Language, as well as life, appears to him in its simplest elements and just as he sees life as "inhaling and exhaling," he sees the great river of English, with its complex constructions and usages as a list of opposites and categories, much like those in Roget's *Thesaurus*. He is one of the lovers of "our lady poverty" both in words and life: his is the creed of the minimum vocabulary and of holy ignorance.

Saroyan prides himself on the sanctity of the long and tragic history of his race, which seems to him to make him unique among men and on his literary gift, which seems to lift from his shoulders the need to write seriously. We are all familiar with the state of self-hypnosis when, by long contemplation, a simple word like "was" or "is" becomes perfectly incomprehensible. The mystic feeling, the wonder, is sometimes agreeable and Saroyan too often finds it so. He chooses a word to begin his story with, goes off into a long contemplation of it until he founds a whole philosophy in that verbal atom. By mentioning that he was conceived, he believes that the whole history of the animate world, as well as man's dated history, is included in that act.

Saroyan uses his few pet words constantly, often without meaning, often as if they were drugs to induce his trance. He believes his own advertising; he believes in the word. When he does not use his pet words he uses their opposites, which is another (but to him, very profound) way of using them. The following are his pets and the basis of his "philosophy" and are computed from the first twelve stories in the book (although they occur excessively throughout): "Lite" (and associated words used almost interchangeably—living, alive, unalive, not alive), 133 times in the first twelve stories; "death" (associates — dying, dead, not dead, deathless), 122 times; "world," 51 times; "earth," 61 times; "universe," 30 times; "everything," 57 times; "nothing," 32 times; "something," 25 times; "everybody, everyone," 28 times. Associated with the last four and used almost senselessly, simply for the sake of general diffusion, are "anything, anywhere, anybody, somewhere, somehow, somebody."

Another device is his constant and comic use of opposites. His repetition and wilful inarticulateness has a subtler purpose: it is for incantation and as a substitute for thinking. Saroyan's is a lazy mind; he slowly churns himself up to an idea. Yet, in many of the stories, after the most boring, hair-splitting and harping on some two or three of his theme-words we get a meteor of beauty—"I walked as a thing still unformed and yet aware of its ultimate form, death and dispersal, sudden pebbling of flesh on alien shores, sudden leafage of tree limbs, sudden flashing of flowers, sudden rage in the bowels of the earth. . . ." These moments of beauty concern primitive things, girls, flowering trees, early morning, his beloved brother; they show the folk-poet in Saroyan. They are the things that have doubtless appealed to his many readers, a welcome purity in love and joy in nature after all the fretful productions of metropolitan life. Thus, when Saroyan's "earth and universe" mood strikes, by chance, as it were involuntarily, a suitable theme, he sudden excels himself and all the wretched models he has been trifling with. But the same man can write, "It was his place and he was the guy and he wanted the city to be the way it was if it was that way. . . ." "The dark sea is never and forever. Sleep. It is everything and nothing and nowhere. It is the music we never hear. It is the heart. The lung. The liver. The eye. The brain."

Saroyan gets paid for this sort of thing. When he is half-asleep he can still sing, he can hum like little boys, buzz like bubbling babies, croon like Bing Crosby. It suits those who pay the piper, too, that Saroyan, man of talent, should be completely fuddled about what a story is and what art is and that he should devote his poetic gifts to piffling about little dogs and automobile fenders formed like flowers. Thus a happy, morganatic marriage is arranged. Saroyan tells a pregnant girl who is thrown out of her room, "O, do not be afraid, do not be ashamed, the Queen of England pregnant is no more than you and maybe something less, so do not be afraid." All men are brothers, but brothers, not through understanding or for any historic reason, but because they "inhale and exhale." They should be happy in their inhaling and exhaling brotherhood; they should eat bread and be satisfied with inhaling and exhaling. But our Pied Piper reads the headlines: "My heart blackens with the cold of knowing," he cannot follow his creed of content in poverty, content in misery, content in ignorance, because he knows that men are going to fight and why? It's very simple. "The wheatfields of America and the wheatfields of Russia. War of the wheatfields so the unborn may eat bread. Diplomacy, science, agriculture, delirium: for bread, Lord." Thus the simple-hearted wiseacre reduces all problems to his common denominators. They are fools who do not stick to their tranquility. . . ."I shall have no pity for the dead. . . .Let them die, I don't care what impelled each one of them to accept the war. . . .They were alive. They are dead. Well, let me tell you something. If they are dead from a war, they were never alive. . . ."

This Pied Piper of the common denominator went abroad. He saw, of course, something and nothing. "London and nothing. Paris and nowhere. Vienna and nothing. Moscow. The same. Dialectical materialism. Class consciousness. Revolution. Comrades. Baloney. Nothing, nowhere." Although Russia is somewhere and nowhere and presumably not in that second geographical area which is not geography but "breathing," Saroyan was there and he saw there a "little dog," also "a small, greasy-looking person who began immediately to speak in American . . . a louse if ever there was one and he talked pompously. He was a true Communist. America was lousy. American workers were getting screwed left and right . . . himself as a good example of the triumphy of ideology over foul matter." He also saw a motorcar in which he presumes were three Russian officials and an actress and he saw three Jewish American ladies who were in ecstacies over tractors.

But he has some rollicking stories in which

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he tries no philosophy at all, but where this king of kaffee-klatsch scribbles along gaily, madly about the things he knows best, the foreign-born populations of America and the pool parlors, barber shops, hobo young men. In this medium I should say he is the best of his generation. There are four officially romantic races in the U.S.A.—the Irish, the Italians, the Negroes and the Jews — but the numerous other alien importations to her towns and fields, the South Americans, Filipinos, Armenians, Greeks, Turks and so on, who help to make the land brilliant and even mysterious, full of problems, to an outsider, are rarely touched upon. Saroyan does this and perhaps has painted one of the first pictures of this America. This is Saroyan's genius. For this Joseph North reviewing Saroyan's first book in THE NEW MASSES, complimented him. He has chosen, however to stay more in his personal trance and to produce drugged and drugging words. It is to be hoped that the choice is not final.

CHRISTINE STEAD.

Brief Review

THE BRITISH LABOR MOVEMENT, by Frederick Engels. Paperbound. International Publishers. 15c.

FROM May 7 to August 6, 1881, Engels contributed ten articles to the Labor Standard, one of the pioneers in English labor journalism. Their reissue at this time is useful. The case for a labor party has rarely been better put.

Alarmed by Engels' forthright appeal to the workers to take matters in their own hands, the editors of The Labor Standard began to suggest editing of the material and the articles stopped. The Labor Party that finally was created in England subsequently edited Engels' views out of its program and stopped being a labor party.

Engels attacked the dependence of labor organizations upon economic demands. He pointed out that crises nullified labor victories, that the fight had to be made over and over again. Labor needed *political* power to consolidate its victories. It had the vote but no real representation until members of its own class were in the government; and it would not achieve a decisive victory in the class struggle until it had taken control of the means of production. These basic ideas of labor strategy he develops from different viewpoints, through discussion of the wage system, of trade union policy, of international trade competition, of free-trade "liberalism," which sought cheap food imports to make wage reductions possible, of the experiences of Continental labor parties and of the "functions" of the capitalist class. Clear and logical and written with warmth it is a model of what labor journalism should be.

BEANY-EYE, by David Garnett. (Harcourt, Brace and Company. $1.25.) Joe Sparling, stupid, starved and brutalized, is an abortive anarchist, the English "Hairy Ape." Mr. Butler, his boss and benefactor, sees him through. It is the case of the enlightened capitalist buying the worker a pony and cart so he can go get himself independence and self-respect hawking old bottles and rags. "There is a tradition of women's tears in many working-class families," he writes, for the "starved-looking young woman" whose "tears ran down her nose" and into her "marmalade pudding." Beany-eye settles "into his new world," the boat pulls out "carrying its hundreds of working people each of whom had finished a chapter of disappointments and failure and was setting out in hope of a new kind of life." Garnett has traveled a good distance from the ivory tower—but his vision is still blurred. The colonies are still a way out!

CONTEMPORARY BRITISH LITERATURE, by Fred B. Millet. (Harcourt, Brace and Co. New York. $2.25.) Students of modern literature, librarians and harassed book reviewers who are hard-pressed for finger-tip information about the better-known British literati, will find this guide to the work of over 200 writers a valuable book of reference. It contains biographies and indexes to critical material. There is also an extensive and conservative Critical Survey of the major figures and literary movements in the field of the novel, poetry, drama, criticism, essay, biography, etc.

Erwin Shaw's new play
"BURY THE DEAD"
will be published in the
April issue of New Theatre Magazine
Order Your Copy Now—15c
New Theatre, 156 W. 44th St., N. Y. C.

Current Theater

New Theater Nights (46th Street Theater, March 14, 15). New anti-war play by Erwin Shaw, *Bury the Dead,* and a condensed version of Walter Ben Hare's 1918 recruiting play, *Over Here.* Acted by members of the Let Freedom Ring Company.

Men in the Dance. (Majestic Theater, March 15). New Dance League presents a representative program including Charles Weidman, Jose Limon, William Matons, Saki, Roger Pryor Dodge, Valentinoff and others.

The Crime (Civic Repertory Theater). Repeat performance of Michael Blankfort's new strike play. Based on actual events in Sioux Falls and Omaha, *The Crime* breaks new ground in making the problems of militant labor live on the stage.

The Poetic Theater (Federal Theater Project). Director Alfred Kreymborg appeals to poets for scripts "dramatic in form, aware of modern life. . . . that shall contribute something to it." (Scripts should be sent to him at 701 Eighth Avenue, N. Y. C.)

End of Summer (Guild Theater). S. N. Behrman's new play produced by the Guild. It mentions THE NEW MASSES but, no press tickets for THE NEW MASSES, says the Theater Guild.

Russet Mantle (Masque Theater). Lynn Rigg's symbolic tragi-comedy of youth and its elders. Not the whole story but within its range it is a provocative, convincing social drama.

Victoria Regina (Broadhurst Theater). How really to appreciate dear old maligned Queen Victoria. Helen Hayes does wonders with a script that oozes sweet sentiment and cozy royal lies.

Boy Meets Girl (Cort Theater). Another travesty on the Hollywood movie industry, with just enough bite and humor to make creditable—if thin—entertainment.

Ethan Frome (National Theater). Edith Wharton's memorable story chopped into episodes. Some sharp, some bitter, but the play as a whole doesn't come up to the novel.

First Lady (Music Box Theater). Professionally clever play about those fine stupid society folk in Washington who supposedly run America. Manufactured from start to finish of synthetic wisecracks and cardboard conflicts. Exasperating when not soporific.

Dead End (Belasco Theater). Millionaire Row and Rat-and-Louse Alley occupying the same city block—reported with the virtues and limitations of photographic realism. And much fine acting.

Love on the Dole (Schubert Theater). Walter Greenwood's dramatized novel which ran fifty weeks in London. It's boring and inept for the most part, but it finally comes to life toward the end and with a hard, bitter finale.

Running Dogs. We suggest a repeat performance of John Wexley's one-act play produced Feb. 16 by the Theater Union. Based on actual events (also recorded by Agnes Smedley but in no sense an adaptation of her writings), it is a solid, absorbing picture of Kuomintang soldiers. (Please note: our review, February 25, contained a confused reference to Roark Bradford.) S. B.

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Music

Notes on New Recordings

TWO WEEKS ago the pianist Rudolf Serkin was unknown to the great majority of the Carnegie Hall audience who came to hear his American debut with Toscanini. But collectors of phonograph records had more than an inkling of the extraordinary performance that was to come of the Beethoven G Major Concerto, from the many Victor records Serkin had made with the violinist Adolf Busch. Records had shown the artist in his true colors: an exceptionally sensitive ensemble player, with a completely assured technical equipment, magnificent tone, and a somewhat limited dynamic range.

His triumph was of such proportions that Columbia is rushing through for release on March 15 the first four of the six Bach *Brandenburg Concertos,* which he recently recorded in London with Adolf Busch and a fine chamber orchestra. British critics have been ecstatic in their enthusiasm, despite the fact that piano is used instead of the prescribed harpsicord.

Within the past two months Columbia has released excellent recordings by Szigeti, Gieseking, and Feuermann, three artists who share somewhat the same approach to music. Szigeti's version of the Prokofieff Violin Concerto is one of complete authority, played with a vigor and insight that make it enormously effective. It is one of the shortest of the big concertos, almost impossible to play, and far easier for the listener to grasp than the composer's later works. The violinist's command of his instrument and of the intricacies of the concerto show up the superficially polished accompaniment of Beecham and a very good contingent from the London Philharmonic, who cannot match his rhythmic vitality.

Gieseking's recording of the Beethoven *Emperor Concerto* will inevitably be compared with that of Schnabel, released over here by Victor. The Vienna Philharmonic, under Bruno Walter, gives a far better account of itself with Gieseking than does the London Symphony, conducted by the pedestrian Dr. Sargent, with Schnabel, but the physical recording of the Victor set is far better than that of the Columbia, which was made with portable equipment in Vienna. This reviewer, however, prefers the Gieseking, if only for the inclusion, on the odd side, of a menuet and gigue from the Bach *Partita* in B Flat Major, an irresistible gem. Incidentally, the Columbia set is considerably the cheaper, despite the extra side.

By far the finest recording of the Brahms E Minor cello sonata is Feuermann's, in which he is assisted by Theo Van der Bas at the piano. The cellist's tone is ideally suited for the microphone, his taste and technical equipment beyond reproach. The only fault to be found is in the balance between the two instruments, the blame for which most likely belongs with the studio engineer and not the artists.

A few months ago Columbia attempted to unite these three artists in chamber music: Beethoven, Debussy, Ravel, and Bach sonatas for Gieseking and Szigeti, and various Beethoven, Brahms, and Tschaikowsky trios. Szigeti and Feuermann were delighted with the scheme, but Gieseking definitely was not. The latter is vice-president of the Grotrian-Steinweg piano company in Nazi Germany, where he and his family own considerable property. His friends Szigeti and Feuermann are somehow "racially undesirable."

The best of the recent swing records introduces a new band, led by an extraordinarily agile Negro fiddle player, Stuff Smith. He and a grand trumpet player make *I Hope Gabriel Likes My Music* (Vocalion 3170) the most exciting disc of the new year, making up for a mediocre version of *I'm Putting All My Eggs in One Basket* on the other side. Benny Goodman's orchestra has finally made *When Buddha Smiles* (Victor) the best of Fletcher Henderson's many arrangements, but the tempo is too fast, the recording and balance execrable. Its backing is a stodgy conception of *Basin Street Blues,* with a mediocre vocal by Joe Harris. Goodman redeems himself in Gene Krupa's new Victor recordings of *Mutiny in the Parlor* and *Clap My Hands* by Gene Krupa's band, which includes seven stars from Fletcher Henderson's and his own band, plus the matchless colored bass player, Israel Crosby. The vocals are not distinguished, but the solos by Benny, Leon Berry, and Roy Eldridge on trumpet are really superlative.

For readers with powerful radio sets and a weakness for late hours, Station W9XBY, 1550 kilocycles, in Kansas City broadcasts the best Negro dance music to be heard in the country every night between 12 and 2, Central Standard Time. It is a small station which has remote pick-ups from three small colored cabarets, where the music has a barrel-house quality not even found at Harlem's Savoy Ballroom. The best of the bands is Bill Basie's, but Pete Johnson's orchestra features an old-time blues singer, Joe Turner, the only one to be heard on the air, and the real thing.

The main disadvantage of record buying is the high initial cost. There are several reliable firms in New York which sell new discs at substantial discounts from the list price and maintain good mail order service. This department will gladly answer any questions about record problems.

HENRY JOHNSON.

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The Screen

"Three Women"

THREE WOMEN (Cameo Theater) is the initial production of a new experimental film group known as the "kino workshop." This collective is made up of all the necessary elements of production: the director, scenarist, composer, actors and photographers, all collaborating on the film in every phase of production. This method has produced some extraordinary results; the outstanding one being Shostakovitch's score, which is the best example of cinema music to date.

The film is dedicated to Romain Rolland, no mere formal gesture, but an expression of a kinship between the Soviet film and the French writer's *L'Ame Enchantée.* Like Rolland's Annette who symbolizes the woman's struggle for liberation under capitalism, director Arnshtam's three working-class girls who fought in the Civil War, form a composite portrait of the contemporary Soviet woman.

Three Women is a biography of proletarian girls who lived in St. Petersburg and matured at the outbreak of the World War. In a scene combining the realistic with the romantic the girls first come into contact with the underground revolutionary movement. The cheap saloon where they come to sing is filled with workers trying to drown their troubles in vodka and empty conversation. The children begin their song which is taken up by the assembly. It swells and intensifies: the "dull mob" is transformed into a militant chorus and the simple workers' song expresses their unified hopes and thoughts.

The film shifts to 1919: the Red Army is defending Petrograd against the Whites. The girls are volunteers in the Bolshevik

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hospital unit. There follows a series of battles and adventures: each encounter symbolizing the girls' politicalization.

Here one can see the influence of *Chapayev*. Unfortunately, *Three Women* lacks that film's progressive character development. The war scenes are too stylized and static. The love sequence, charming in itself, is overlong and shows a bad Hollywood influence.

One should be grateful for any film full of such fine acting as that in *Three Women;* the entire first section (especially the saloon sequence) is as brilliant as the best Soviet films. When one realizes that this is Arnshtam's first film, the faults become insignificant. His future work should be of first importance. PETER ELLIS.

Between Ourselves

THE Chicago branch of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES announces a symposium on "Europe Faces the Barricades," with John L. Spivak and William E. Browder as the speakers. Ben Meyers, Chicago Secretary of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES, will be chairman. Date: Sunday, March 22, 8 P. M. Place: Ashland Auditorium (Ashland Blvd. at Van Buren St.).

One of our subscription-getters recently established something of a record. He brought in new subscriptions totalling $53.75 —obtaining all of them in a single day. Readers who would care to embark upon a "friendly contest" with this prodigy should communicate with our Circulation Department.

Carol Brown of 15 Pinckney Street, Boston, has some back copies of THE (weekly) NEW MASSES and would be glad to donate them to libraries or organizations which request them.

Rosalyn Tureck's piano recital, for the benefit of THE NEW MASSES and the May Department Store strikers takes place at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, on the evening of March 27. The concert is held under the auspices of the Brooklyn Branch of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES.

Alex Shane of 15 Crown Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., offers his file of copies for organizations or individuals who can make good use of it.

Last week we announced that the present issue would contain an important article revealing startling facts of the conditions facing political prisoners under British rule: "Chain Gangs in Palestine." On Friday, came the news of the Stalin-Roy Howard interview. In view of its vast international importance at this time, we decided to hold out "Chain Gangs in Palestine" and to give the space to the complete text of the Stalin interview. "Chain Gangs in Palestine" will appear shortly.

Soviet Communism by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, discussed editorially on page 10 of this issue, is the current selection of the Book Union.

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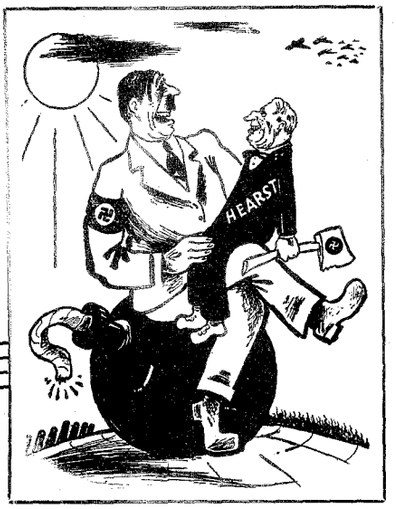

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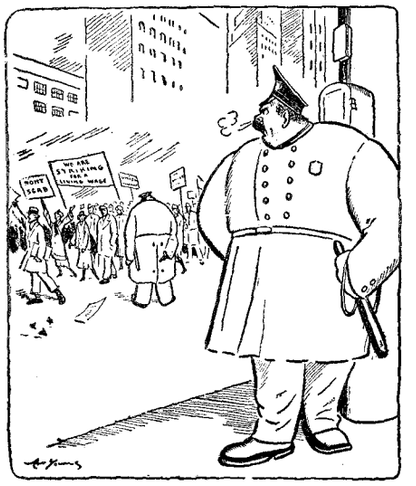

Cartoon Number Two

Cartoon Number Three

John D. Rockefeller

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1. Anyone (except employees of the New Masses or their families) is eligible to enter the title contest.

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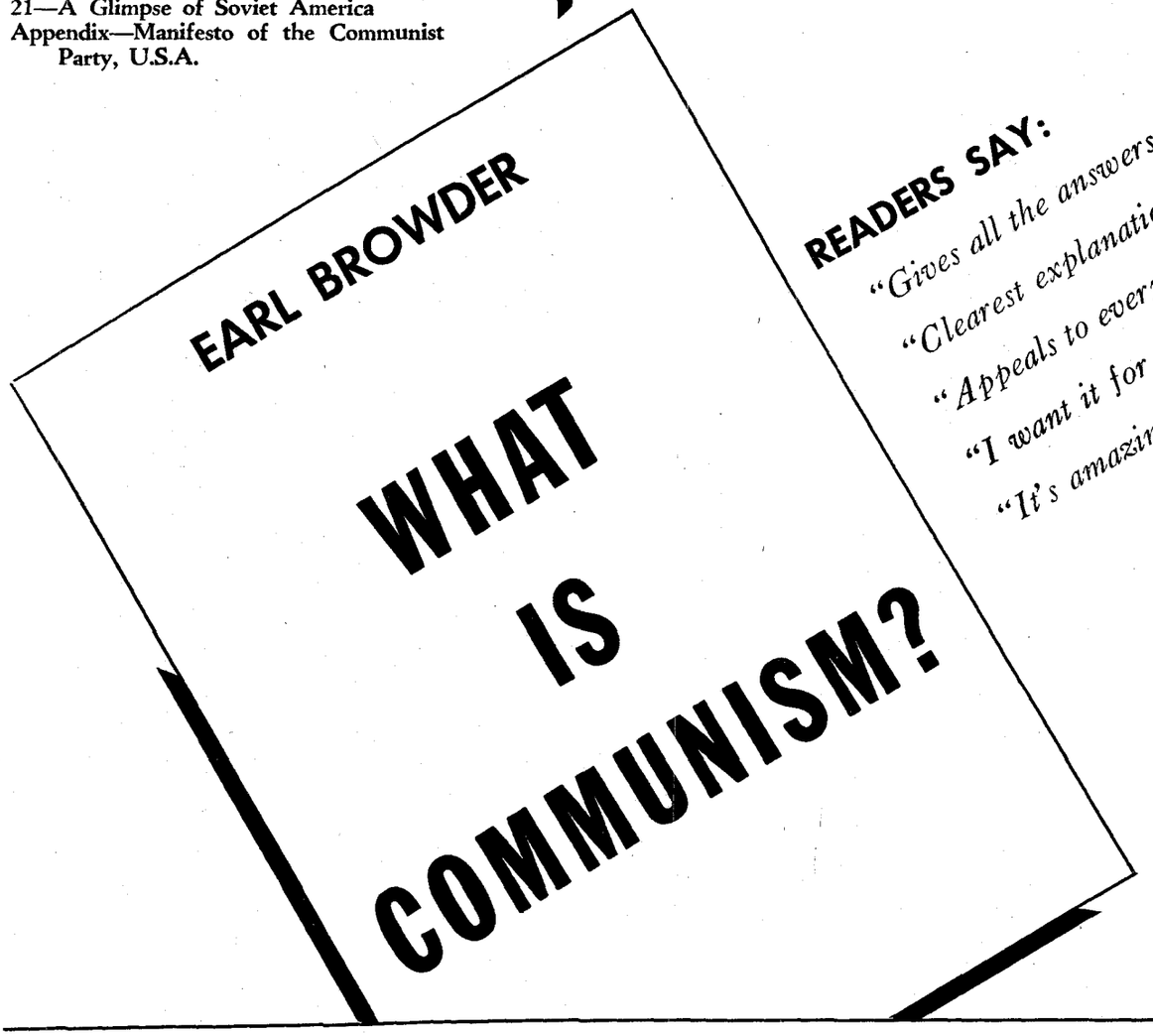

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